



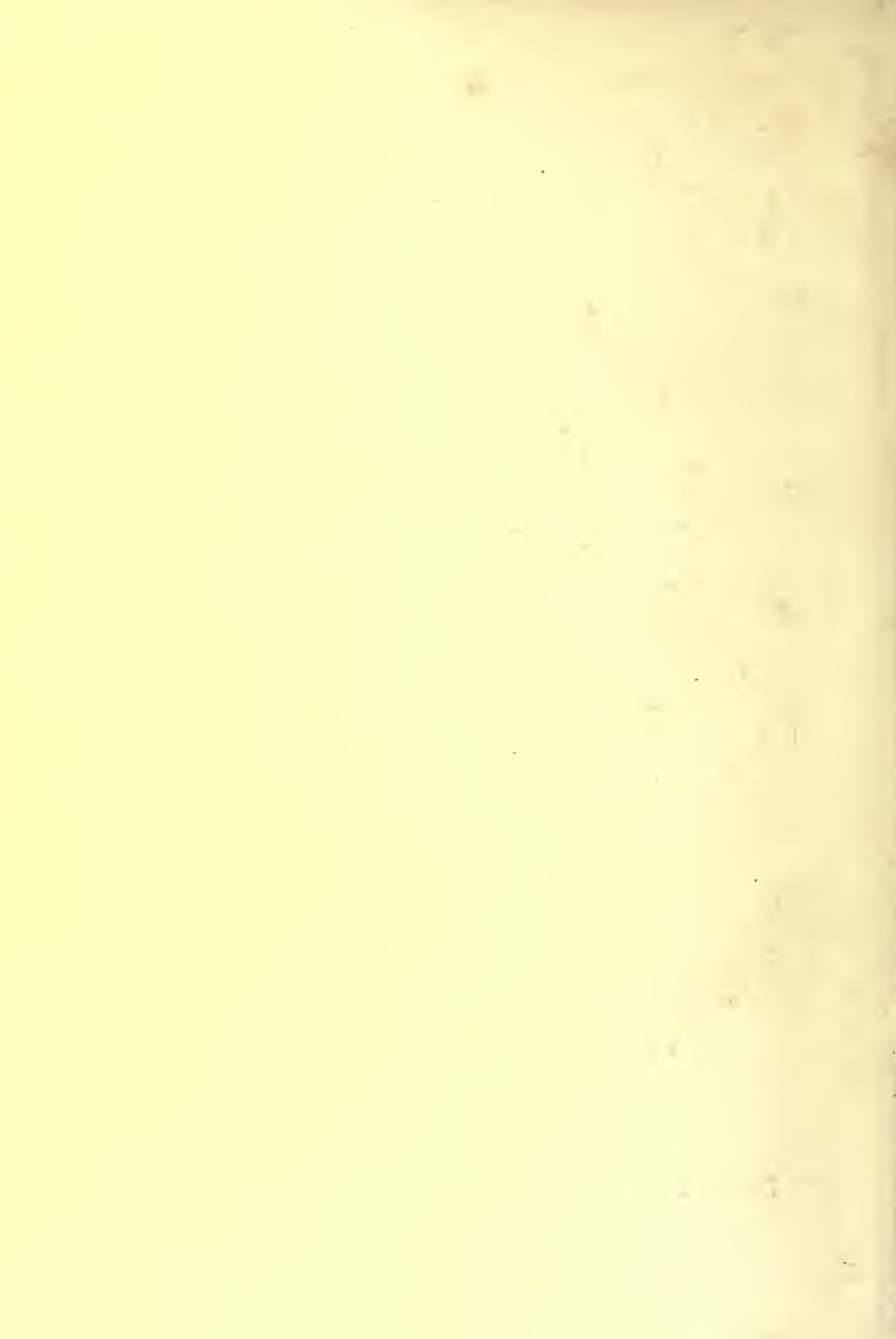
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

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DRAMAS AND POEMS.



Dramas AND Poems

BY
MAURICE R. KEESING



Comprising

“ ROTORUA ”

“ THE HELM OF LIFE ”

“ THE DESTROYERS ”

LAYS AND LYRICS

Including

ESPERANTO

AND OTHER POEMS

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AUCKLAND :
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P R E F A C E.

I N writing the works now published in this volume, I have steadily kept in view the desirability of clearness and modern phraseology. I should not feel justified in endeavouring to mystify my readers, even were I capable of that feat.

"Rotorua" presents a contrast between the Powers of Nature and the pranks and foibles of that Being who is "a little lower than the Angels"—occasionally far lower. Dramatic consistency influences the grade of diction of the characters. Even in the nectar offered by the Muse, all cream and no milk might cloy the palate of the taster.

By studying "The Destroyers," anarchists may, or may not, perceive by whom, and for whose cause, the inevitable penalty must be paid.

I need hardly be expected to declare that vile or prejudiced statements or opinions expressed by characters in the dramas are the absolute reverse of my own sentiments. If ever they be using mild slang, or accidentally indulging in humour, bad or good, it is very reprehensible in them. I apologise for any of their stray wit. I am serenely unconscious of a faculty so obsolete. To the critics I say, "Sirs, you cannot have your cake all sugar and icing. Cut it up, by all means. That is the purpose for which it was made. Then, served up with your sauce, it goes round to that curious arbiter, the public."

"The Helm of Life" was written in 1884, and, soon afterwards, submitted to a Melbourne critic, who wrote, "This poem exhibits a true poetical faculty in the writer, with power of thought, and great facility of poetical expression. It will certainly attract attention when printed." But the printers of those days were timorous. If, by reason of some names used in this poem, any injured innocent may dread an imminent danger of New Zealand being captured by the Yehudim, let him remember England in the time of Cromwell, and the Johns and Marys that are English yet not English.

As regards my Esperanto, I have endeavoured, as much as possible, to satisfy even Dr. Zamenhof.

I shall be sufficiently rewarded for the thought and labour involved in the production of this book, if intelligent readers derive a modicum of pleasure from the perusal of it.

I am glad to avail myself of this opportunity to heartily thank my publishers for the pains they have taken in the performance of their function, and the excellent results obtained by them. I am grateful also to Mr. Josiah Martin, Messrs. Beattie and Co., and Mr. Schmidt, for the choice views and photographs they so kindly permitted me to select.

Maurice R. Keesing

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ROTORUA: A FANTASY.

Rotorua : A Fantasy.

PERSONÆ.

LINDON—*Smartly dressed young author.*

SIR PALTER POTBOIL—*Eccentric old Baronet, with spectacles, stick and wig. Entomologist.*

MR. BUNTER—*Business-like old fellow. Grumbler, stout, bald. Wears spectacles.*

DOLDRUM—*Sharp, cynical Tourist, acquainted with things.*

DOCTOR—*Fussy, conventional.*

CHIEF GIANT.

CHIEF GNOME.

ETHEL—*Young, good-looking, well-dressed.*

BARBARA—*Eccentric old maid, queerly dressed, wearing eye-glass, and with wig and gingham. Painted. Pseudo-scientific.*

MRS. BUNTER—*Middle-aged, matter-of-fact.*

SULTANA *of visiting Fairies.*

SELAMA—*Her Counsellor.*

CHIEFTAINNESS *of Maori Fairies.*

Visiting Fairies (Indian, Malay, and Burmese). Gnomes, Giants, Maori Fairies. Tourists. Porters. People of Township. Maoris (in background).

Rotorua : A Fantasy.

ACT I., SCENE 1.

Part of Waitomo Cave. Changes to immense cave, with stalactites, stalagmites, and columns. River running through.

LINDON (*seated on projection*), *playing oboe.*

Chorus without. Boat song.

CHORUS.

Urge on the golden boat,
Ply fast the ruby oars ;
Swift o'er the wave we float,
Through gleaming crystal floors.

LINDON.

What sounds are these that flow upon the air ?
Not human is their tone, but like a dream.
Methinks they can evoke some vision fair,
Framed from the rippling of yon spangled stream.

[*Resumes his playing.*]

CHORUS (*without*).

See all the diamond drops
That glitter round the cave.
'Tis here our journey stops,
In this high-vaulted nave.

[*LINDON ceases playing.*]

[*Enter Golden Boat, from which leap fairies and gnomes. They form a procession, the gnomes leading and playing on various instruments. A Ballet follows, with effects. The fairies are dressed in Indian, Malay, and Burmese costumes.*]

LINDON.

Let me all silently behold this sight.
Stupendous miracles appear to loom ;
For this is not an elfish freak of night,
And day wons not such mystery to assume.

SULTANA.

Await our friends, the fairies of the beach,
To guide us through the forests, o'er the hills,
Until, at length, our final goal we reach,
The terraced wonders with their broidered sills.

SELAMA.

They come ! Our scouts are keen upon the track.
I hear their footsteps lightly tripping near.

SULTANA.

Prepare we to receive them. Do not lack
In courtesy, or hospitable cheer.

[Enter Maori fairies, preceded by two gnomes.]

Most hearty greetings to my sister elves.
We come from far-off lands beyond the sea,
Whence, in the time gone by, you came yourselves.
Your guidance we would have, if you agree.

CHIEFTAINNESS.

Our salutations ! Welcome ! Rest and stay !
We shall most gladly show you all our State !
Inform us when you will pursue your way ;
To lead you forward we your word await.

SULTANA.

First share the feast that we intend to spread,
To celebrate our coming to your isle.
We bring the best of wine, and meat, and bread,
In flasks and hampers of the latest style.

CHIEFTAINNESS.

Great lady, let us seek the forest's shade,
Where all our plates and dishes deck the trees,
And on the grass the banquet shall be laid,
Near pure, cool streams, and open to the breeze.

SULTANA.

Lead on ! 'Twere better there than in this hall,
Where seats are hard, and semi-darkness reigns.
I love the forests ere the evening's fall,
Or when the Moon shines ripe, before she wanes.

[Some gnomes find LINDON, and bring him forward.]

But stay ! What form is this that meets our eye ?
A man has listened to our secret speech.
What must be done with him ? Is he to die ?
Or shall we use him for what he can teach ?

SELAMA.

Inquire, my Raja, what has brought him here,
And where he journeys, if we let him live.
Your mighty Presence can but cause him fear,
And force from him what knowledge he can give.

SULTANA (to LINDON).

Explain what led you here, and how you dared
To stay, and witness all our pomp and power.
No mortal who has seen our face is spared :
Do you not dread the fatal, final hour ?

LINDON.

I am in love, and this is full excuse
For all the rash and foolish acts of men.
My suit is spurned, and I receive abuse
From those who keep my angel from my ken.

SELAMA (*to SULTANA*).[^]

O ! spare him, gracious lady, for I know
How terrible are these affairs of heart.
Some pleasure from our management will flow,
If we can baffle those who fond ones part.

SULTANA.

And is your love reciprocated, youth ?
How looks the maiden when she meets your glance ?
If you will tell us all and only truth,
We promise that your cause we shall advance.

LINDON.

I am a member of that wretched band
Called tourists, who are doomed to trot the globe.
I came to view the wonders of this land,
And met this maid in fascinating robe.
My eyes were charmed, and soon the fell attack
Assailed my heart and made it sore and sad ;
For, when I sued, her father turned his back,
And asked me whether I was drunk or mad.
He is so rich, and I am passing poor,
And have no dignities to swell my name.
I think the maiden loves me—I am sure ;
Her parents and her aunt naught else could blame.

SULTANA.

And whither go you ? Stay you always here ?
What route do they pursue, and when depart ?

LINDON.

I follow where I find my angel dear ;
They leave for Rotorua when they start.

SELAMA.

Oh ! That is excellent. It suits our plan.
My Lady, what great fun from one poor man !

SULTANA (*to LINDON*).

Enough ! you come with us, and do our will,
And you shall see the charming maiden still.

CHORUS and March, *with Effects*.

On, fairies, on !
To the trysting-place.
All clouds are gone
From the sun's bright face.
Deep in the woods,
Where no eye can see,
With dainty foods
We shall merry be.

[*Exeunt.*][*Without.*]

Cooee ! Cooee ! Where are ye ?
O'er the hill, and away from thee ;
Come, trip along in the cool and shade ;
Clear of the hill, we shall meet the glade.

[END OF SCENE 1 OF ACT I.]

ROTORUA : A FANTASY.

ACT I., SCENE 2.

Forest. Totara, rimu, tree ferns, etc., undergrowth, grassy space.

[Enter fairies and gnomes, with LINDON.]

CHIEFTAINNESS of Maori fairies.

On this green sward recline ;
Come, rest your weary limbs.
'Tis here that we can dine,
And frame our plans and whims. [*They sit.*]

SULTANA.

Arrange the feast with speed,
Smart nymphs and clever gnomes.
Bring branch, and flower, and weed,
As in our former homes.
[*Fairies and gnomes busily prepare.*]

What forests, chieftainness,
You boast in this, your isle !
Peace seems their shades to bless,
And all their aspects smile.
Our jungles foster strife ;
The tiger's savage growl
Affrights. There snakes are rife,
And murderers stealthy prowl.
The log that seems to lie
Along the river bend
Leers with a wicked eye,
Prepared its prey to rend.

CHIEFTAINNESS.

Here no dread brute disturbs
The silent calm of night ;
Nor 'mid our native herbs
Is venom'd reptile's spite.

SELAMA.

These lofty trees that rise,
On every side around,
Attractive to my eyes,
In singing birds abound.

CHIEFTAINNESS.

Far to the North the noble Kauri lifts
Its leafy crest, defying every wind ;
The timber and the gum it yields are gifts
That for our country recognition find.
The Totara is what you here admire,
A valued stem, an ornamental tree ;
The Rimu, too, will yet more fame acquire,
This dark-red pine with spiky fronds you see ;
And there the Miro, with its berries bright,
Affords the native pigeon ample food.
But yonder graceful ferns, a pleasing sight,
Lend constant charm to all the shady wood.

SULTANA.

Look there ! Observe those gnomes
Approaching us with speed.
Some love-lorn girl, who roams,
A prisoner they lead.

SELAMA.

Our captured man looks round
With eager eyes at her.
This girl that they have found
Must be his angel fair.

[LINDON rises. *The gnomes bring in ETHEL.*]

ETHEL (to LINDON).

What reason for your absence can you give ?
And who are these strange folks with whom you live ?

LINDON.

I know not. As I sat within the cave
There grew, as in a dream, a lofty nave ;
And, from a golden boat with ruby oars,
These people landed on a river's shores.

ETHEL.

Are these, then, fairies, and do such exist ?—
Escaping from my aunt, when you were missed,
I wandered in the forest, till I met
These little people, who upon me set.

[*The fairies and gnomes disappear. The part of the forest scene where ETHEL and LINDON stand remains.*]

But look ! We both have dreamed,
And, in our dream, have sought
Each other's presence, and it seemed
A miracle was wrought.

LINDON.

Dear Ethel, 'tis delightful here to meet.
I feared that you I ne'er again might greet.
Your father will not hear of my rash suit.
Your mother treats me like a fool or brute.
And as for your sour aunt, I pity you,
Tied to her beck and call. What can we do ?

ETHEL.

Our love will prompt us to the proper way,
Whereby we cannot fail to gain the day.
But listen ! Hear you not a distant voice
That calls me ? 'Tis my aunt. I have no choice
But to obey. So leave me where I am,
And I shall meet her like a simple lamb.

LINDON.

We're perfect strangers, or comparative.

ETHEL.

So perfect, I might say superlative.

[LINDON kisses her hand and exit.]

[Enter BARBARA.]

BARBARA.

To wander in the forest at this time
Is bad for health, in this most humid clime.
The human system is so weakly built
That chyme and chyle are mixed with bile and milt.
My physiology, not learned at school,
Prevents me from becoming e'er a fool.
Young girls are ignorant of laws of health,
And carelessly destroy the blood's full wealth.

ETHEL.

This lecture would be better in a hall,
But here it seems not suitable at all.
The birds are free to breathe this sweet, fresh air,
And can I not with them its perfume share?

BARBARA.

The winged creation is not made like man ;
Birds' bones are hollow, and their system's plan
Allows them to take liberties unfit,
Which anthropology will not permit.
Uncultured, like my brother and his wife,
You cannot live the wise and useful life.
While I, who studied Science from my youth,
Am always following the way of truth.

ETHEL.

So many sciences as you pursue
May cause confusion as to what is true ;
And all these "ologies," in one brain mixed,
Can ne'er in order due be clearly fixed.

BARBARA.

False argument is what I cannot stand,
My reasonings are all maturely planned.
Phrenologists have told me that my mind
Transcends the brain of average womankind.

ETHEL.

No doubt. But if for me this atmosphere
Is much too damp, why, then, do you stay here ?
The young may dare what does not suit the old.

BARBARA.

I'm not so ancient. Girl, you are too bold.

ETHEL.

Yet rheumatism you can not avoid.
If by its pains you would not be annoyed,
'Twere better now to quit this dangerous spot,
And I must go at once, if you will not.

BARBARA.

Rheumatics come from tannin in the veins ;
Since I left drinking tea, I lost my pains.

ETHEL.

But have you not been ailing this long while ?
And say you not you cannot walk a mile ?

BARBARA.

You chatter everlastingly. Pray cease !
When you begin, a person has no peace.

ETHEL.

We need not quarrel, so, to end the talk,
I shall consent from here with you to walk.

BARBARA.

Well, take my arm. I cannot see the track.
We shall be late for tea ; so hurry back.

ETHEL.

Your legs are strong, when you will act the scout ;
Your eyes are sharp enough to find me out.
[ETHEL takes her arm.]

[END OF SCENE 2 OF ACT I.]

ACT I., SCENE 3.

*Rotorua Lake and Settlement. Near shore of Lake. Group of
Maoris in background.*

[Enter BUNTER and MRS. BUNTER, arm-in-arm.
BARBARA and ETHEL behind them.]

BUNTER.

There's nothing wonderful to see
About this sleepy lake.
My warehouse is the best for me,
Where money is, to take.
Now, when I come to see the world,
Which was to be so grand,
My thumbs are tired of being twirled,
While money's out of hand.

MRS. BUNTER.

But, John, you must have holidays
To freshen up your mind.
The boy that works, and never plays,
Is dull, we always find.
The little that you spend on me
Will not be missed by you,
And, when we get back home, you'll see
How much there'll be to do.

BUNTER.

The little that I spend ! Oh, crumbs !
A fortune gone in dress ;
And then the never-ending sums
On victuals, trips—Ah, yes !
There'll be a lot to do at home
To get both ends to meet.

MRS. BUNTER.

John ! How absurd you talk ! Now, some—
Ah ! Don't tread on my feet !

BUNTER.

Then keep your feet away from mine.
I must let go your arm.
If you should fall, that would be fine!
You'd raise a nice alarm!

BARBARA.

They say it is quite dangerous
To walk without a guide.
You should employ one here for us,
Lest we should slip or slide.
It is quite hollow, too, I've read,
And boiling underneath,
With brimstone, tufa, lava dead,
Concealed below the heath.
Gneiss, schist and scoria all melt
Where we our footsteps place;
Then mud that scalds will on us pelt;
We'll sink, and leave no trace.

BUNTER.

You read a lot of trash, I think;
What you call science lore.
Where I can walk, you'll never sink;
So let me go before.

[They leave the track and wander over towards a steam-hole. Enter three gnomes. Unperceived by the Characters, ONE GNOME goes before BUNTER, and stamps on the ground. Steam issues. The TWO OTHER GNOMES walk one on each side of BUNTER. ONE GNOME catches hold of his left leg, and pushes it into the steam-hole where the first gnome stamped.]

BUNTER.

Ow! Fire and furies! Pull me out!
It boils, and burns far worse than gout.
My leg is scalded to a pulp!
Oh! Save me! Or 'tis my last gulp!

BARBARA.

I told you so! You would not hear.
Now, when you are half dead with fear,
You must admit what science shows.
From Knowledge every blessing flows.

BUNTER.

Help! Hang your science, woman! Pull!
I sink! You stand there like a fool!
Get hold of me, and pull me out
From this infernal boiling spout.

[MRS. BUNTER and BARBARA try to pull him out. Meanwhile the GNOMES hurry off ETHEL towards the lake, where LINDON comes along in a boat. The GNOMES put her on board the boat, and LINDON rows away with her. Enter DOLDRUM. DOLDRUM drags BUNTER out. They lay BUNTER down, and examine his leg.]

BARBARA.

In Latin this is called *adustio*,
And Carron oil, or soda, as you know,
Are remedies for this, but, sad to say,
We did not think to bring them with to-day.

BUNTER.

Ow ! Ah ! Don't touch it ! Latin stuff I hate.
You are not fit to do a thing but prate.
Run ! Get a doctor ! Or I'll die with pain ;
And stop your lectures and your talk insane.

[DOLDRUM pulls out flask.]

DOLDRUM (to BUNTER).

Here ! Drink some brandy. It will give you strength
To bear the pain, and bring you round at length.
I like it not myself, but, when there's need,
I think it proves a useful friend indeed.

MRS. BUNTER.

[BUNTER drinks.]

Oh ! John, I hope you're not much hurt, my dear.
Shall I run now and fetch a doctor here ?

DOLDRUM.

It is too far. To take him home is best.
We'll carry him, with now and then a rest.

BARBARA.

But where is Ethel ? She has run away.

MRS. BUNTER.

Oh ! Gone to find a doctor, I should say.

[Enter ETHEL with DOCTOR, from direction of lake.]

DOCTOR.

Good day, my friends. This accident is sad.
It will not be so very very bad. [Looks at leg.]
A little skilful handling at the first
Will stop results from being at their worst.
Removal gentle, care, attention, sleep ;
The patient from all irritation keep.
Myself shall visit him from day to day.

[As he attends to leg.]

DOLDRUM (aside.)

He pays his visits while his visits pay.

BUNTER (while doctor binds his leg).

Ow ! Oh ! Ah ! Ugh ! I cannot bear your touch !
It hurts me, Doctor. Must I suffer much ?

DOCTOR.

'Tis better you should feel some pain, and bawl,
Than if you had no sentiment at all.

[LINDON enters in boat, and, unnoticed by others, kisses his hand
to ETHEL. She holds up her finger at him.]

[END OF SCENE 3 OF ACT I.]

[END OF ACT I.]

ROTORUA : A FANTASY.

ACT II., SCENE 1.

*The White Terraces. Lower basons projecting on to stage.
The visiting Fairies. Gnomes, Maori Fairies. Sultana. Chief-
tiness. Chief Gnome. The dignitaries, and others, seated.
Some Fairies and Gnomes roaming about Terrace.*

CHORUS.

Hail to the fairy basons,
Fringed with their pearl-white marge !
Hail to the magic masons,
Who made the work their charge !
Fashioned by Fancy's finger,
Carved by the dreamland sprites,
Framed for the eyes to linger,
Chief of the world's great sights.

CHIEF GNOME.

When in our sportive moods, in fun,
O'er mountain tops we used to run,
Adown the slopes we rolled the rocks,
With witty quips and antic mocks.
From beetling peaks and tree-crowned hills
The gold-streaked quartz plashed in the rills.

MAORI FAIRIES.

While on the level beach we danced,
And raised long ridges where we pranced.

[Enter four GIANTS.]

CHIEF GIANT.

Our works excelled your puny tasks :
What we achieved your wonder asks ;
For, delving in a sea of fire,
We cast up boulders ever higher.
Far o'er the mountain tops they flew,
And fell around like monster dew,
Then, cooling as they struck through earth,
They straight belied their fiery birth.
Great fuming flues towered up, to tell
How we were toiling hard and well.

MAORI FAIRIES.

While we were carving marble caves,
And lashing up the wild green waves.

CHIEF GNOME.

We twirled and twisted twining toils
From slender stems and snaky coils ;
Gnarled trees, and knotted tangled sprigs,
And decked the trunks with crawling twigs.
On frowning cliffs that face the sea
We carved quaint mugs right merrily.

MAORI FAIRIES.

While we were wedding flowers to weeds,
And filling fruits around hard seeds.

CHIEF GIANT.

Your trifling ways deserve our scorn.
By us great tracts of earth are torn.
Fierce boiling water-columns fly
Away aloft to meet the sky.
The rocky layers, all too straight,
Are thrown aslant by our mere weight.
The sand, the powdery shell or bone
We press to massive mounts of stone.
The forests sink beneath our blows,
And o'er their trunks the dank swamp flows.

MAORI FAIRIES.

Whence we distil their gum and oil ;
So Art transmutes, where Wrack would spoil.

CHORUS of *Maori Fairies*.

Pohutukawa's crimson broom,
The Rata's handsome bright-hued bloom,
The yellow Kowhai and the red
Were favourites we grew and bred.
The Harakeke's sword-like blades,
The fern-fronds in the forest shades,
The toe-toe waving with the breeze,
We love to form and cherish these.

GIANTS.

But we preferred to hunt the Moa
And Whales that swam close in to shore.

GNOMES.

The Kiwi with thin tapering beak,
The Sprouting Worm we most would seek.

MAORI FAIRIES.

While we e'er love the Tui bright,
Each bird that bids farewell to night.

[*Exeunt* GIANTS.][*Enter* LINDON.]

SULTANA (to LINDON).

Approach, and tell us what we long to learn.
Do cold-souled parents still your love-suit spurn ?
And is the gentle maid still kind and true ?
Have we effected any good for you ?

LINDON.

Oh ! Yes, Your Highness, we are well content ;
But parents rich will not so soon relent.
First discs of gold must tinkle in the scale ;
And metal counters buy a heart on sale.

SELAMA.

Imagine that, my Raja ! What they love
Is paltry shiny dust, all else above !
What wonder though ? They love themselves so much
That cognate dust is precious to their touch.

SULTANA.

Can you not gather in the discs to buy
The heart that you so cherish ? Do you try ?

LINDON.

I use all efforts by my humble skill
To earn renown, and thence to gain my will.

SULTANA.

Yet let us help you forward to your goal ;
And rest obedient under our control.

LINDON.

Your succour is a gift that I shall prize ;
No man should fairies' kindness e'er despise.

SULTANA.

We have some questions you may rightly solve,
Which in a labyrinth our minds involve.
An ill report to us has been conveyed,
Some evil-workers have our trust betrayed.
These lovely Terraces are not intact
As they were left, but sadly marred and hacked.
Examine that wide rim around yon bath,
And see how cruel hands have cut a path.
Still further off, I'm told, great slabs of pearl
Are stripped away by some destructive churl.
Selama, who can read your English scrawl,
Declares to me what is the worst of all :
The place of Hinemoa's charming myth
Degraded by the vulgar legend, "Smith."
Brown, Jones and Robinson deface the fringe
Of rich embroidery, without a twinge.
My rage and indignation so annoy
That were I strong I would the whole destroy.
Can you explain what mean these Vandal acts,
And if there are extenuating facts ?

LINDON.

Your Highness, no excuse can palliate
What wantonness and mischief perpetrate.
The creatures who have chiselled here their name
Have no location in the Book of Fame.
Insane collectors carry off in lumps
Rich ornaments, removed with careless thumps.
'Tis fortunate they cannot reach the stars ;
They'd rob them of their rays, to show in jars.

SULTANA.

Is this the vaunted human love of good ?
Their minds and hearts must be of rotten wood.

[Two GNOMES bring in ETHEL. The fairies and gnomes disappear.]

[Enter, from opposite direction to ETHEL and LINDON, MRS. BUNTER wheeling BUNTER in an invalid chair, and BARBARA walking behind.]

BUNTER.

Take care ! My joints are racked with pain !
Once home, I'll never tour again.
These roads are brutal, full of holes ;
They're made for jolts and jumps and rolls.
Hallo ! Look there ! That writing fool
Approaches Ethel near that pool !

BARBARA (*calls to* LINDON).

Begone ! For us you are no class !
Make way, and let your betters pass !

LINDON.

Your manners are too delicate
To cause us longer here to wait.

[*Walks off with* ETHEL.]

BARBARA.

Stop thief ! Oh, help ! They run away.
We must an information lay.

[*Enter* DOLDRUM.]

DOLDRUM.

What trouble makes you shriek so high ?
No danger here I can descry.

MRS. BUNTER.

My daughter ran off with a man.
When we refused, then she began—

BARBARA.

The man used force to drag her off.
The fellow is a scribbling soph.

DOLDRUM.

Oh ! He is harmless ! Not the sort
To sink a ship, or storm a fort.

[*To* MRS. BUNTER.]

Your daughter is as safe as I
With this young lady, standing by.

[*Turning to* BARBARA.]

BARBARA.

Not so ! Young man, you are too rash ;
The scoundrel wants to get her cash.

DOLDRUM.

Her cash ! I thought it was herself !
Oh ! what an ill-conditioned elf !
Well, I shall follow them at once.

[*Aside.*]

I'm not an interfering dunce !

[*Exit* DOLDRUM.]

[*Enter* TWO GNOMES *slyly.*]

BARBARA.

Oh ! What a nice young man that is !
A darling dear, and not a quiz !
I hate an old pedantic ass,
With rhodomontade smug and crass ;
But give me young and charming boys ;
These are my chief and only joys.
You'll see he'll bring bad Ethel back ;
For me he hurried on her track.

[*She sits down and puts her gingham alongside her. A GNOME steals and hides it. MRS. BUNTER sits down. BUNTER goes to sleep in his chair. THE OTHER GNOME pushes up his spectacles over his bald head, and puts back his hat over them. Excunt GNOMES. BARBARA and MRS. BUNTER yawn, and gradually fall asleep.*]

[*Enter ETHEL cautiously, LINDON follows.*]

ETHEL.

Asleep ! In presence of this wondrous beauty,
Which human eyes might dote upon for aye !
Some come to see as if it were a duty,
And unimpressed, unseeing, turn away.
So Beauty, Music, Love remain closed treasures
To such whose hearts have not divined the key
That opens wide their secret mystic pleasures.
The ignorant are slaves ; the wise are free.

LINDON.

When Love awakes the soul to quickened feeling,
All things delightful glow with deeper charm ;
All Nature's good, and all her ways are dealing
Beneficence ; no space is left for harm.
Come, rest upon this alabaster seat,
And soft confer on themes of trust and joy.

[*They sit.*] Your heart and mine in close communion beat,
While with your golden locks I loving toy.

[*BUNTER groans in his sleep.*]

ETHEL.

Away ! He wakes ! I fear for you, my dear.

LINDON.

I go ; but only to assuage your fear.

[*LINDON kisses her.*]

[*As he goes.*] You will not always fear authority,
Nor brook the will of seniority.

ETHEL.

Majority must rule minority ;
But soon I'll be in full majority.

[*LINDON kisses his hand to her, and exit. BUNTER wakes up and stares at ETHEL.*]

My father, you have slept awhile ;
You feel much better, for you smile.



BUNTER.

Ungrateful girl ! Why did you go
With that young good-for-nothing, though ?

ETHEL.

Dear dad, he is a pleasing man ;
Regard him better, if you can.

BUNTER.

No. You must wed a Baronet.
Sir Palter Potboil's in my set.

ETHEL.

But he is old, and ugly too,
And broken down far worse than you.

BUNTER.

A title is no frequent catch ;
For me he is your only match.

ETHEL.

And if to marry I refuse—

BUNTER.

Then all my money you shall lose.

[BARBARA and MRS. BUNTER wake up.]

ETHEL.

I know you all will storm and scold ;
But I'll not barter love for gold.

BUNTER.

To-morrow he arrives by train,
With purpose my consent to gain.

ETHEL.

But mine he ne'er may hope to win ;
He better not with me begin.

BARBARA.

What ! Child, who are you flouting now ?
Not that young scapegrace, anyhow !

ETHEL.

Expressions, aunt, that are not true
Will gain contempt, as is their due.

MRS. BUNTER.

Well, Ethel, you are sadly changed.
This silly love has you deranged.

BARBARA (*getting up and examining sinter on terrace*).

Let me pursue geology.
I need make no apology
For stripping off a slice or two
Of silica from where it grew.
I want some sulphur and some mud,
Some petrifications, twig or bud.
I'll make a full herbarium
Of all the plants at which I come.

BUNTER.

If love drives some young women mad,
For old ones science seems as bad.

BARBARA.

Age has not come to me as yet,
But you will soon in dotage get.

MRS. BUNTER.

I think we better all go back ;
The sky is getting very black.

BARBARA.

Where's my umbrella ?

BUNTER.

Where's my specs. ?

BARBARA.

Confound it ! [*Searching about.*]

BUNTER.

Damn it ! [*Meditating and fossicking.*]

ETHEL.

Trifles vex.

[*Lifts BUNTER's hat and discovers spectacles.*]

[END OF SCENE 1 OF ACT II.]

ACT II., SCENE 2.

Exterior of Hotel at Rotorua.

Tourists. Porters carrying luggage into hotel. Some people of Township moving about, and some watching new arrivals.

SIR PALTER POTBOIL *with valise.* BARBARA *standing in street, watching tourists.*

SIR PALTER (*to BARBARA, in a wheezy voice.*)

Are you the lady I have come to court ?

BARBARA (*aside*).

I hope this man is not a shingle short.

SIR PALTER.

These coleoptera, a species rare,
Accept from me. My tastes, I hear, you share.

[*Taking some beetles from valise.*]

BARBARA.

Ugh ! Nasty, horrid bugs ! You bold old man !
Oh ! I am fainting. Catch me ! Where's my fan ?

[*Pretends to be about to faint.*]

SIR PALTER (*supporting her*).

Excuse me. I was sudden. Yet, I pray,
Admire this katipo, just stuffed to-day.

BARBARA (*disengages herself from him*).

A poison spider. Oh ! I suffocate !

Oh ! Lead me in, before it is too late !

SIR PALTER.

But here's a monster weta. Why this haste ?

I thought that Science was quite in your taste.

BARBARA.

O ! Please put all those nasty things away !

Who are you ? What have you to me to say ?

SIR PALTER.

I am Sir Palter Potboil, Baronet,

Who thought you were to be my future pet.

BARBARA.

Oh ! Dear Sir Palter, I rejoice to see

That you have recognised at once poor me.

SIR PALTER.

Although I never saw you in my life,

I guessed at once that you would be my wife.

BARBARA.

You'll pardon me, Sir Palter ; I must go

To make my toilette. See me soon, you know.

SIR PALTER.

Impatiently, my dear, I'll wait the hour
When I shall have you in my humble power.

[BARBARA goes into the hotel.]

[Enter BUNTER, limping, and with stick.]

BUNTER.

My dear Sir Palter, you have well arrived ;

For our affair must be at once contrived.

SIR PALTER.

I've met your daughter. Charming creature, quite !

We love each other, so to say, at sight.

BUNTER.

Hum ! That's surprising ! Girls are baggage strange ;

There's nothing pleases them like chop and change.

SIR PALTER.

I heard she worshipped Science ; but I find

In knowledge of such things she's far behind.

BUNTER.

My sister is a perfect Science fiend,

But Ethel knows no more than babe unweaned.

That physiology my sister spouts

For women is unfit ; I have my doubts.

SIR PALTER.

Some ignorance is bliss. In tender hearts
Too much of knowledge discontent imparts.
To start at shadows, scream at stealthy mice,
Shows innocence and delicacy nice.
Your daughter has a healthy horror, then,
Of ugly creatures, insects, beasts, or men.

BUNTER.

Ah! Probably. It may be as you say.
 I never noticed she was took that way.
 The telegram you sent I now have here.
 Strict business requires all things made clear.
 I'll read it out, and you can sign your name;
 Then no one can make you or me to blame.

[Pulls out telegram and reads.]

"I come to-morrow claim the lady's hand."
 This is a contract good. In law 'twill stand.
 So write your name, while I a witness call.
 Here, Doldrum! Witness this, and write it small.
 [Puts telegram against wall. SIR PALTER signs telegram with
 pencil, and DOLDRUM also.]

That's right. Now you and me are bound in law;
 And so, to seal it, let me shake your paw.

[SIR PALTER and BUNTER shake hands.]

We three will take a nip together here.
 The bar is full. The room behind is clear.

[They enter hotel.]

[Enter LINDON and ETHEL, arm-in-arm.]

ETHEL.

My birth-day is to-day. I'm twenty-one.

LINDON.

Then you'll consent with me to cut and run.

ETHEL.

That bold expression rather shakes my nerve.

LINDON.

Oh! Any other just as well will serve.

ETHEL.

Elope, get married, tie the nuptial knot;
 There are so many ways which mean a lot.
 But veil and orange-wreath are nice and neat,
 And saying "yes" is quite with joy replete.

LINDON.

It all depends to whom you make the vow.
 This Baronet, for instance, who's here now—

ETHEL.

The horrid monster! I'll avoid his sight,
 And, indisposed, I'll keep my room all night.

[Enter BUNTER from hotel door.]

BUNTER.

Oh! There's my daughter! Fellow! What! You
 dare!

The heartless hussy hunts with hound and hare!

[LINDON leads her to other entrance of hotel. She enters. Exit

LINDON. BUNTER limps after ETHEL.]

[END OF SCENE 2 OF ACT II.]

[END OF ACT II.]

ROTORUA : A FANTASY.

ACT III., SCENE 1.

*The Pink Terraces. Canoe with Maoris near foot. They paddle off.
Enter Fairies, Gnomes, and four Giants.*

BALLET, with bells, castanets, etc. EFFECTS.

They seat themselves, but some roam about Terrace.

SULTANA. They tell me where the snowy peak
Of Tongariro belches reek,
A bright, clear lake is restful found,
Which pumice boulders border round.
Near this the Powers that wonders do
Are forming now a terrace new.
For future ages this shall serve
That will its purity preserve.
While simple natives held the land,
No ill against our work was planned ;
But, since these whiteskins came in flocks,
There's nothing safe, not e'en the rocks.
Selama horrifies my ear
With tales of phrases that appear
On all the monuments of old,
Relating what is bought and sold.
It seems that we shall have to cope
With pedlars posting up " Pears' Soap,"
And on the Terrace pinnacle
To have this as a binnacle.
Now, Giants ! Hasten to my call !

[Enter TWENTY GIANTS. THE OTHER FOUR join them.]

Your work must be to make this fall.
Bring ruin all around this tract.
The terraces, all burned and cracked,
Must totter, break, and leave no sign.
Go soon to work, and all combine.

GIANTS (*bow*).

We go to do your mighty will.
How many culprits shall we kill ?

SULTANA. Spare all you can. What lives are lost,
Too near will linger, to their cost.
Ourselves will leave the place, in grief,
And weep hot tears in every leaf.

[*Exeunt Giants.*]

SElama. Let's travel South and see their Lakes,
The Snowy Alps, the Plain that quakes,
The Havens grand, where pigmy ships
Sail far within those mighty lips.
There Sounds excel, with Mitre Rocks,
Spain's Rias, Norway's Fiords, Scotch Lochs.

SULTANA.

Then back to Auckland's pleasant site,
 Where Waitemata sparkles bright ;
 To visit all her Cones and Mounts,
 And all the Isles her own she counts.
 Anon we'll trim our Golden Boat,
 And homeward o'er the ocean float.
 Selama, I am sad ; my thoughts are pain.
 Sing something sweet, to cheer me up again.

SELAMA (*takes harp from a Gnome and sings*).

Dream of Paradise,
 Where bright angels play ;
 Purer than white ice
 In the Polar day.
 Why must such beauty fade and pass away ?
 Nymphs on Love might muse
 In their azure founts,
 On Leander's ruse
 And on Hellesponts.
 Oh ! Pity when this Land their presence wants !
 Hinemoa sought her swain
 On Mokoia's lonely strand,
 When Tutanekai's sweet strain
 Guided her to Love's bright land.

CHORUS.

Come away ! Come away !
 We'll relent if here we stay !
 Let the giants work their ire,
 With the ever eager fire.

[*March of Gnomes, playing instruments. They troop out, followed by the Fairies in line of march. EFFECTS.*]

[END OF SCENE 1 OF ACT III.]

 ACT III., SCENE 2.

Rotorua. Exterior of Church.

[*Enter SIR PALTER POTBOIL, dressed for wedding, with BARBARA in bridal costume. Enter BUNTER and MRS. BUNTER.*]

BUNTER.

What means this nonsense ? Barbara, what's this ?

BARBARA.

It means I'm bound to taste of wedded bliss.

BUNTER.

Take off this tawdry rubbish !

BARBARA.

No ! I won't !

BUNTER.

Then I shall pull it off myself !

BARBARA.

Oh ! Don't !

[BUNTER tugs at bridal veil, which, being fixed to BARBARA'S wig, comes away with that, too. BARBARA screams. SIR PALTER tries to recover veil and wig. His hat falls off, and his wig, too. He fails to recover veil, wigs, or bell-topper. They are blown some distance away, but not out of sight. DOLDRUM appears at church door and comes out.]

DOLDRUM.

This is a meeting of the young and fair !
The best of friends must part betimes—their hair !

BUNTER (to DOLDRUM).

Here ! You were witness to the contract. Eh ?
Sir Palter for his breach of law must pay.
My daughter he's deceived, my sister duped ;
I'll fight him till his pockets clean are scooped.

SIR PALTER.

My pockets or my purse are far from full ;
Your sister's money will supply the pool.

BUNTER.

You measly wretch !

MRS. BUNTER.

You mummy of a man !

BUNTER.

I'll beggar you !

MRS. BUNTER.

Escape me if you can !

[Enter from the Church, LINDON in wedding costume, with ETHEL, in bridal dress, leaning on his arm.]

BUNTER.

Oh, crumbs ! What next ? Are these foul ghosts
I see ?

MRS. BUNTER.

They're very real indeed, it seems to me.

ETHEL.

We're married, mother ; so keep calm, I pray.
It must have come some time, if not to-day.

BUNTER (to LINDON).

You miscreant ! Have you robbed me of my girl ?

LINDON.

I've wed her, and shall wear her as a pearl.

MRS. BUNTER (*to* LINDON).

But you are poor as church-mouse in a pew.

BUNTER.

I shall not part a penny-piece to you.

LINDON.

I am the noted author of "The Bore,"
Which brings me in ten thousand pounds, and more.

BUNTER.

Oh, come ! This is another coloured horse !

[*Shakes hands with* LINDON.]

MRS. BUNTER.

Maternal feelings fill me with remorse !

[*Mrs. BUNTER embraces* ETHEL.]

DOLDRUM (*to* BUNTER).

Your contract was not good in law, you know.

BUNTER.

How's that ? *Now* do you tell me this is so ?

DOLDRUM.

The lady was not named, and so I think
At this young couple's coupling you should wink.

[*Indicating* SIR PALTER and BARBARA.]

SIR PALTER (*to* BUNTER).

Quite so ! I thought the same ! It is a fact !
So with a dowry you'll confirm our act.

BUNTER (*to* DOLDRUM).

You rascal ! Why did you not point it out ?
You wolf in sheepskin ! Now you raise the doubt !

DOLDRUM.

I witness much, and yet can hold my tongue ;
Through comrades blabbing, friends are juggled or
hung.
By witnessing, and giving naught away,
I gave away this pretty bride to-day.

[*Pointing to* ETHEL.]

[*Aside.*] And took a kiss, as fathers always should.
I think as father I am pretty good.

BARBARA.

I always said he was a nice young man !

[*To* DOLDRUM.]

I quite forgive you for your two-faced plan.

DOLDRUM.

I never did pretend to be a saint ;
That's just put on, like powder, rouge, or paint.

BARBARA.

Indeed, there's none on me. I spurn the hit !

DOLDRUM.

Let those who wear it feel the cap will fit.

LINDON.

Come, let's forgive all round ! This day of joy
In reconciliation we'll employ.
Good-bye at present ! We shall hurry home.
You'll all receive a copy of my tome.

[Exit LINDON with ETHEL.]

BARBARA.

Oh ! Save me ! All the ground begins to rock !

[BARBARA falls into SIR PALTER'S arms.]

[They all stand horrified.]

DOLDRUM.

Be calm, my friends ! This is an earthquake shock.

BUNTER (*trembling*).

Oh, Lord ! Why did we come to this foul spot ?

SIR PALTER (*shivering*).

I feel all shivery-shaky, cold and hot.

MRS. BUNTER (*weeping*).

Oh ! Hire a coach and leave at any cost !

BARBARA (*shrieking*).

My scientific hoards will all be lost !

[They all rush out, leaving veil and wigs and bell-topper on ground. DOLDRUM remains. He winks, whistles, and chuckles with delight, while, having proceeded to where they lie, he examines the wigs and veil and bell-topper. Gnomes, in background, capering.]

DOLDRUM (*comes forward*).

If Wit and Humour, Fun and Mirth
Were banished from this Globe of earth,
Poor Man would droop, despair, decay,
While Woman wept her eyes away.

[END OF SCENE 2 OF ACT III.]

ACT III., SCENE 3.

Darkness. Tarawera and surroundings seen dimly.

CHORUS OF FAIRIES AND GNOMES (*without*).

Farewell to the Lake !
Let the Mountain quake,
And the huge rocks fly
In the midnight sky !

Act III.]

ROTORUA : A FANTASY.

[Scene 3.

CHORUS OF GIANTS (*beneath*).

The fires are ablaze,
And the furnace rays
Are now creeping o'er
Up the Crater's core !

FAIRIES (*without*).

Oh ! Have pity, knaves !
Our soft heart now craves ;
Stay the ruin fell,
And undo the spell !

GIANTS (*beneath*).

Oh ! Too late ye cry !
Boulders burst on high.
Hear the fumes now roar
Up the Crater's core.

FAIRIES AND GNOMES (*without*).

Ha ! The mischief grows !
Hear the sobbing throes
Of the Earth's sore breast,
With the pain oppressed !

GIANTS (*beneath*).

See the lightning flash !
Hear the thunder crash !
Now the mountain splits !
Now the wild fire spits !

[*Lightning flashes. Thunder. Volcanic Eruption.*]

[END OF SCENE 3 OF ACT III.]

FINIS.



THE HELM OF LIFE.

The Helm of Life.

Were not the Stars part of our Life,
We should not see them shining there.
Did not Perfection end the strife,
We should not dream its grandeur here.
If souls were killed in dying breath,
We should not ponder Love and Death.

I.—1.

Celestial Sweetness, smile on this my task
With sympathetic love, for what I ask
Is inspiration to unfold the best,
The noblest treasures wherewith thou hast blest
This otherwise worthless world, where mankind lives
Not prone to use aright the gifts Life gives.

Imbue with lofty thoughts my mind, my soul,
To reach with language fit so high a goal.
Crown me with kindly grace, that I may sing
What glorious truths thou guardest 'neath thy wing.
O ! Bright Intelligence, shine clear on me,
That I the fulness of thy light may see.

This wondrous globe has rolled for ages past ;
No mortal knows what ages it may last.
Man, its chief creature, use of all can claim,
Changing its aspects ; Progress his great aim ;
Possessing Mind and Heart to feel and grieve
That Evil is, which his Soul longs to leave.

So many Virtues are his privilege,
If he to Good would all his actions pledge,
Much Misery and Vice he could efface
Which still, with menace dark, weigh down the race ;
Could break the chains of each enslaving ill
That vanquishes a too elastic will.

Too weak, in this short stage, to be all pure
Or wholly perfect, yet some rays obscure
From holier spheres throw light across his path,
Though dimly seen, which raise the hope he hath
To live a brighter life, with nobler ends
More fitted to his Spirit, which ascends.

THE HELM OF LIFE.

O ! would that here he might attain that Good
He so desires, but seems to be withstood.
May that not be ? Ah, no ! I fear me not.
Not in this world is happiness his lot.
Yet here he can attain a high ideal,
And make his Spirit's longings almost real.

O ! Glorious Subject ! Can I fitly sing,
In humble numbers such as these I bring,
Thy grandeur ? Can I hope to clothe thy light
In such a garb to make it not too bright
For human eyes to gaze upon its form,
And with its influence all the Spirit warm ?

My theme is Virtue, Wisdom's lovely spouse,
(Who oft Man's healthy Intellect doth rouse
To noblest efforts, both in age and youth) ;
Their offspring, Goodness, Knowledge, Beauty, Truth.
All these to celebrate is my intent :
O ! would their priceless aid to me were lent !

2.

Welcome, Fiery Sun !
That purplest all the eastern hills with golden sheen,
I hail thee, as thou glowing risest o'er this scene.
Strange, thou art but one
Of Nature's vast bright Spheres of warmth and light.
Immense, thou look'st but small to our poor sight.
How long has thy course run ?
The metal fused in thy great pits of fire
Mayhap lights countless Worlds to this World prior.

Thou wert esteemed a god by ancient man ;
Now Science thy analysis can scan.
They deemed thee source of Virtue and the Arts ;
We make thee useful, and define thy parts.

The World's full beauty thou revealest now
At daybreak, which with roseate tints o'er brow
Of mountain and o'er seas of fleecy cloud
Came peeping up, then to thy influence bowed.

Thy rising is a signal to the swift-winged, bright-eyed birds
Whose busy music fills the forest's shade,
And hosts of creatures rouse themselves, some trooping
forth in herds,
Each with an instinct that must be obeyed.

'Tis morning now ; the duties of another day begin,
And Man must do his usual course of work ;
The town sends forth the murmur of an e'er increasing din ;
There many virtues live, and vices lurk.

THE HELM OF LIFE.

Hail, then, Radiant Sun !
Since thou hast rolled from this World's first commence-
ment thus,
E'er rising, setting, shining, still the same to us :
Lo ! thou tell'st of One,
Eternal, Self-existent, through all time Unchanged,
Who in an order wise stupendous systems ranged ;
And though thy course should run,
To merely end with all those Worlds that live by thee,
Still He will reign supreme, His time Infinity.

Poor mortals cannot estimate His power,
Nor Science search His way in its brief hour ;
The Intellect knows Virtue and the Arts
To be His gifts, this Earth's diviner parts.

The World's full beauties, to our eyes revealed
At all times, which with various tints o'er field
And hill, o'er sea and sky, and in the wood
Come shadowing forth, all tell His influence good.

The trilling and the warbling of the gifted, song-voiced birds,
Who with their notes make glad the sylvan shade,
The hasting forth of creatures seems to tell, in all but words,
They most rejoice when Nature's law's obeyed.

Thus follows day on day through all vicissitudes of time,
And Man lives out his chequered term of life ;
The World sends forth complainings of a sorrowing sublime ;
Whilst Vice with Virtue wages deadly strife.

3.

And thou, Bright Orb, hast shone in splendour thus
O'er empires dark oblivion shrouds from us ;
Their names have perished, with their records lost ;
They hailed thy light ; perchance their god thou wast.

Yet, wondrously preserved in Earth's dark womb,
Oft is revealed an ancient nation's tomb.
The ghosts of ages past rush forth to greet
Our modern seers, who can their tale repeat.

Who hath not heard, with wond'ring, rapt delight,
Old Egypt's hieroglyphic tales of might,
The doctrines of a mummy's faith ere death,
Whose winding-sheet serves him in lieu of breath ?

And great Assyria's arrow-headed signs
Narrating valued lore in mystic lines ?
Who hath not dreamed a coming age will glean
The knowledge that these revelations mean ?

THE HELM OF LIFE.

Still Israel's wonderful theocracy
Controls with precepts our democracy,
And Greece and Rome bequeathed their treasured share
Of Wisdom, Arts, and Science to our care.

Ye grand old races ! Whither have ye gone ?
Can ye from planets bright look down upon
This little globe, and recognise your homes
Of ancient days, and know each change that comes.

We girdle earth with iron zones of speech,
Impelled by vapour all its countries reach.
We strive to make that brotherhood of Man
Which ye by noble theories began.

Ye may not quite condemn the scenes ye left,
Nor deem them now of interest bereft ;
For ye have loved those spots with virtuous pride,
And left them with reluctance when ye died.

Your memories are grateful to our hearts,
For all ye gave of Virtue and the Arts ;
These are the richest legacies on earth,
The only works that make this life of worth.

Around me as I look, I see the signs
Of ancient knowledge shaped with modern lines ;
Yet many things that are both new and great
Have been revealed to Genius of late.

4.

Thou, splendid Architecture, didst exist
From times remote. Men thy grand aid enlist
To body forth a sentiment sublime
That dwells within their souls, throughout all time.

The love of Beauty caused the proudest piles
Of ev'ry age to rise in num'rous styles,
From India's marble Taj and pillared cave
To grand cathedral, campanile, and nave.

But chiefly Grecian art supplies the base
Of modern forms, though styles they interlace.
Exterior grandeur Gothic modes bestow ;
Alhambra gives interior grace and show.

Akin to virtue thou hast been esteemed,
And all symbolic of all goodness deemed,
By theoretic bearers of thy name
Who hide their doctrines from the eye of Fame.

THE HELM OF LIFE.

Fit emblem of the lofty aims of Man,
Who all the Universe would wish to span.
And fitter still when some stupendous pile
Lies shattered all, but beautiful the while !

5.

As, on this breezy hill, I stand and gaze,
Soothed by the morning's pleasant, sunny rays,
Man's works seem marvellous for such a mite ;
A town is e'er to me a wondrous sight.

A host of busy ants, each bent on gain,
On storing up with trouble seeds or grain,
Is wonderful enough ; but such a dot
As man can fathom Nature, and what not ?

Yet there he strives to earn his daily bread,
And plans and struggles on with troubled head,
While strong within the soul, to heav'n akin,
Rebels against the bonds that hold it in.

Mankind is one great Body, and its Mind
Expands with Time and Knowledge, till it find
Its happiness consists in Wisdom's rules,
Its Power and Science should be Virtue's tools.

It shakes itself with many a mighty throe
Of pain and anguish, whilst Diseases slow
Distort its limbs, yet ceaselessly its Brain
Works out the Problem, spite of grief and pain.

The Right must win, the Truth must come to light,
Though veils of gloom still dim their splendour bright ;
That noble quality of onward strife
To reach them countervails the ills of life.

A gem upon a mountain's rugged height,
Blazing with brilliance on the mist-fogged sight,
The weary pilgrims, having gained the goal,
Hail with glad tears, and greet with joy of soul.

Such is the jewel Truth, which, hid in clouds
And hard to climb to, sparkles through its shrouds,
But, once attained, becomes a pure delight,
And with its rays repays a long grim Night.

6.

The Universe is one vast Bible, writ
With the Creator's hand, but why should Wit
So ample be His gift to pigmy Man
To be the commentators on His plan ?

THE HELM OF LIFE.

To loftier, happier regions doth the Mind,
Released from earth, untrammelled, unconfined,
Soar joyful freed from cage, from prison, here
And, wiser through experience, have its sphere ?

That God who gave Inventive Power and Thought,
To bless this earth, resolveth them to nought
Must seem incredible to all who know
How far Investigation here may go.

What ! Ye great Heroes of each Peaceful Art,
The fruits of whose great labours ne'er depart,
Do ye lie 'neath a few damp feet of sod
And mingle souls like yours with dust and clod ?

It may not be ; your death was but the flight
Of life from earthly garb on wings of light.
Ye flourish still in intellectual strength,
Not measure in the grave a body's length.

And ye who, modest or with speaking deeds,
Pursue and practise Virtue, are your meeds
To be the food of worms ; to fat the soil ?
No, such is not the goal of your hard toil.

Have courage, therefore, ye whom sorrow bows ;
Be steadfast, ye whom dark despair endows
With gloomy views of life ; let not fell doubt
Drive Nature's gifts of Hope and Love quite out.

Reflect that though ye chafe, regret, despair
That this state with your hopes does not compare ;
'Tis much that we are blessed with precious gift,
A corner of the veil of Heav'n to lift.

Through the locked portal's bars the Mind's eye peers
To catch some glimpses, 'midst bright struggling tears,
Of the Ideal's garden, which 'twill see
When Death, in pity, comes and turns the key.

7.

Behold how grandly in the azure sky
Through hostile clouds the Sun mounts up on high,
With genial radiance warming all his stars !
'Tis thus that Virtue rises, though Vice mars.

And as though he doth seem to sink to us,
And darkness comes, yet he still duty does :
So Virtue works, like him, in hidden path,
But brings forth light whene'er its dawn it hath.

THE HELM OF LIFE.

While standing here, and viewing from this hill
The circumjacent landscape, whilst the trill
Of morning songsters from the adjoining wood
Welcomes the cool, fresh breeze in tuneful mood,

I seem to hear a voice float softly by,
And breathe, with cadence sweet, a pitying sigh,
And say, "Poor Mortal, why canst not know all—
"Not just enough to grope along the wall

"That separates thee from the realm of light ?
"Poor owl ! Thy wisdom only sees by night,
"And the full day would blind thee with its sheen ;
"Yet the All-wise to Him thy soul will wean."

Ah ! It is true ! How far doth knowledge go
To prove to us how much we do not know !
And yet we dare to question and to doubt
The use of things we cannot follow out.

O ! Mystery of Life, could Virtue rule,
And Man live but to make himself her tool,
How beautiful a World were this of ours,
A garden free of thorns and full of flowers !

Ye Sons of Earth, let Virtue be your guide ;
Let Honour be your sole, your constant pride.
Your lives will then be worthy, and your aims
Exalt the circle which your labour claims.

II.

I had a vision ; from the mystic mine
Of inward thought in imaged forms it rose ;
As some bold artist brush with subject fine
Endows the spacious canvas, till it glows,
So seemed it to take shape, and people air
With forms that were not, or in spirit were.

A stately city stood before my view,
With lofty buildings towering on high ;
Its streets were wide and healthy, and it grew
In beauty as I wond'ringly drew nigh,
Till, full of admiration and of awe,
I paused before a splendid mansion's door.

A noble-figured man accosted me,
Inviting me to enter and partake
His hospitality, since humbly he
To ev'ry stranger did this offer make,
Believing it his duty thus to share
The riches God entrusted to his care.

THE HELM OF LIFE.

I thanked him much, and followed him within,
My well-pleased eye detecting tasteful art
At ev'ry step, such beauties as must win
Spontaneous approval, and impart
A sense of exaltation to the soul,
E'er recognising Beauty as its goal.

Passing a spacious hall we entered then
A large, magnificently furnished room,
Where comfort reigned, a place for kingly men
To rest from public cares, and to illumine
Their mutual mental light, till radiance reign
And each from his compeer some brilliance gain.

The richly panelled walls were studded o'er
With extracts from great writers, wreathed in gold,
While pictured exploits, sculptured acts, and lore
In bright examples Virtue's beauty told.
The carpet 'neath our feet instruction gave,
And Knowledge seemed for Man's behoof a slave.

For coolness marble fountains softly plashed
Their sparkling, perfumed waters through warm hours ;
Their basins floated lilies, whilst they washed
With sprinkling shower bright parterres of flowers.
No false, luxurious tinsel of display
Oppressed the eye, or made the scene too gay.

On seats combining elegance with ease
We rested, and in pleasant talk communed,
And then my host revealed a power to please,
Seeming by his surroundings to be tuned.
Our conversation turned on many things ;
The hours flew by as if with hurrying wings.

I found Zerupha was this city's name ;
A gifted place it was, for, as I learned,
No pauperism here could footing claim ;
Each resident a competence had earned.
This was a strange phenomenon to me,
Accustomed poverty and shame to see.

My kind host smiled to note my puzzled air,
But did not offer explanation then ;
He wisely waited till, by staying there,
I might perceive things yet beyond my ken.
So when one stumbles in a language strange,
Use brings its idiom soon in easy range.

THE HELM OF LIFE.

He spoke of facts I could not fathom oft,
I who had left a different phase of thought
To enter on this mystic scene, and doffed
The mantle of the fashion this age taught.
Could e'er a former period understand
The wonders of the Future's magic wand ?

The hour for some refreshment having come,
He asked me would I honour him and share
In his repast, and make his house my home.
I gladly acquiesced ; and then, as 'twere,
The floor did yawn, and from beneath there rose
A table laden full with dainty shows.

Our meal was wholesome, pleasant, and select ;
Some dishes new to me I much approved,
At which he laughed, and said he did expect
I might not relish these, which he most loved.
They were but chemicals—a flavoured mass,
But full of strength and nourishment, though gas.

I stared at this, but, with good-humoured smile,
He said I must be satisfied with taste,
Not seek to know ingredients, for their style
Was not to let the air above them waste.
Yet, he assured me, all was clean and sweet ;
Nothing that was not pure was good to eat.

From handsome vessels then we cheerful quaffed
A cool, refreshing nectar, which was such
As quenched all thirst, and spread an influence soft
O'er all the feelings, and delighted much ;
Yet no intoxicating strength it had,
No power to tempt to crime, or make men mad.

Being both satisfied and soothed we rose,
And he invited me to follow him
Into another room, where lovely shows
Loomed through a softened light, with aspect dim.
Here we reclined on couches richly wrought
In various styles which our age ne'er has taught.

And then came floating through the ambient air
Such melody as I ne'er knew before,
Most like the rapturous, bird-like notes, so rare,
When some great violinist's soul doth soar
Up to ethereal spheres, and there commune
With angel artists, who inspire the tune.

THE HELM OF LIFE.

O Music ! loveliest gift of God to man !
Why was I not thy favoured votary too ?
Why was I doomed this earthly life to span,
Loving thee so, yet not allowed to woo ?
Thou art my soul's delight, and yet regret,
Since ne'er thy highest favours can I get.

Had I but known the palace where thou wert,
And heard thy cherished suitors breathe their loves,
My passion then would not have lain inert
Till Duty snatched my heart ; her it behoves
That I should follow, leaving thee for e'er,
Until my spirit meets thee still more fair.

Thou art a heavenly essence like to light,
Not sternly practical nor worldly tinged ;
Thy heroes know not here thy beauty bright ;
They strive to catch thee, but thou fliest, fleet-winged.
At times thou comest down from distant Spheres,
Where sweetly thou dost play for angel ears.

I roused myself ; my host, reclining near,
With sympathetic, almost loving, smile,
Looked in my face ; I saw a shining tear
Stand in his eye, so beautiful and clear ;
The music took a bold, triumphant tone—
A symphony of timbre I had not known.

Enchanting poetry of wordless sound,
Replete with sentiments it seemed to me,
And with its glory made my heart rebound
As if I were rejoicing with the free.
Such are the strange delights of this great art,
Which joy or deepest sadness can impart.

The sweetest sounds were blended in one strain
Of grand, harmonious song of string and reed
And tones I tried to recognise in vain.
Methought such music might contain a creed ;
As if expressing some ideal dream
Which seemed not earthly, but a heavenly beam.

And then of voices sweet and fresh a choir
Burst forth in song angelic in its tone,
From pure-voiced boys, a strain that did inspire
With rapture, having beauties all its own.

The words were striking, eloquent, and true ;
Thoughts high, profound, and noble they expressed ;
Such song might pierce the empyrean blue
And plead with God to pardon laws transgressed.

THE HELM OF LIFE.

“ Mysterious sphere, revolving round and round
“ In vast Creation’s boundless firmament,
“ Here may we stay, with useful labours crowned,
“ Till peaceful Death removes our lives well-spent.
“ May Intellect, our Great Creator’s gift,
“ Be e’er victorious, by Virtue nursed ;
“ May Honour, Truth, and Love our souls uplift,
“ And all the power of Evil be dispersed !
“ Rememb’ring how the Past swept swiftly by,
“ Impelled by Time’s strong hand through ev’ry age,
“ A speck in view of wide Eternity,
“ We humbly bow at Wisdom’s open page.
“ May Progress lead us on to purer paths,
“ And noble Science guide us to the Truth ;
“ May glories yet undreamed of be our Earth’s,
“ The pleasures of its Age outshine its Youth !
“ Bless we our God, who favoured us so far
“ To send us here in time so much advanced,
“ Wherein our minds on high may boldly soar,
“ Rejoicing fair and free in strength enhanced.
“ Blind Ignorance, thy thick, dark clouds were rent
“ By Wisdom’s thund’ring voice, and lo ! the flash
“ Of Learning’s lightning gleamed in glintings sent
“ From Heav’n, presaging her approaching crash.
“ It severed thee in twain, and broke thy power
“ Irrevocably, and, the battle o’er,
“ The sunlight comes, the cool, refreshing hour
“ Of blessed calm, to heal the World all sore.
“ Wert thou not once, O ! Earth, a scene of pain,
“ Of Persecution levelled at Research,
“ And doth not now the love of Knowledge reign
“ Supreme where Virtue doth her bright throne perch ?
“ Rejoice, O ! World, and all Creation sing
“ With Love and Hope, for still each lofty mind
“ Shall onward lead thy destiny, to bring
“ That fire from Heav’n to form a worthier kind.
“ Onward ! Still on ! With God our guiding hand ;
“ The Future opens glorious paths to view ;
“ The veil that hides her face so nobly grand
“ Gives zest to each explorer of the new.”

The chorus ended here, and then a voice,
A sweet soprano, entered on the theme,
As ’twere the herald of the Future’s choice,
So pure, so lovely, did its accents seem.

THE HELM OF LIFE.

With pizzicato strings and harplike runs
The instruments gave colour to the song ;
Thus doth the varied rainbow from the Sun's
Assistance borrow hues its span along.

It ceased ; a symphony came swelling on,
Significant of hopeful confidence,
Increasing to the shouts for vict'ries won.
I listened mute, enraptured ev'ry sense.

My host was moved as well. His gleaming eye,
His lighted countenance, betokened how ;
And, rising quickly with a heartfelt sigh,
A cloud seemed lifted from his noble brow.

I longed to ask the source of all this choir
And orchestra of grandeur far beyond
What had been heard by living mortal prior
To this creation of the Future's wand.

But speaking would have seemed to break the spell
Of sweet, ecstatic joy that held my heart ;
Such glories were enough, though none might tell
The reason why they were, nor whence the Art.

I left enquiry till a calmer mood
Should rule us both, and, rising from my seat
At signal from my host who silent stood,
I followed him some fresh delight to meet.

Without the entrance of the room we left
He paused, and asked me near his side to stand.
I did so, when, as 'twere, the floor was cleft,
And swiftly we rose upward hand in hand.

Soon we were looking skyward, and we stopped
Upon a lofty tower's dizzy height ;
A glorious prospect here, for this o'ertopped
The city all, with scenes full, fair and bright.

He bade me gaze my fill, but how could I,
So new to these strange sights, be sated then ?
I must, forsooth, find out the reason why
Before these views came kindred to my ken.

The landscape was a charming scene indeed ;
A sparkling harbour, bright with dancing waves,
Enclosed by chain-like isles which onward lead
From out a spacious gulf their shores that laves ;

Itself its shape attains by one long tongue
Which stretches out to claim the city free
From Ocean's boisterous rage, who inward swung,
Checked in his bragging mood, inclined to flee.

THE HELM OF LIFE.

On gentle heights, and in sweet, modest nooks,
Were lovely dwellings kept with taste and care.
I judged the inmates' instinct by the looks
Of their abodes, and knew them happy there.

The southern shore was crowned with structures grand,
Of solid, stately stone and marble pure,
Fit mansions for a race framed to command,
And for a city founded to endure.

Choice gardens gave a charm to ev'ry home,
And pretty parks lent fragrance to the air ;
Here Order with her sister Beauty come,
The people's welfare was their rulers' care.

Where wavelets kissed the handsome walls of stone
That faced the harbour's heaven-hued expanse,
Rode giant vessels of a build unknown
To me, ere now I saw them wave-borne dance.

From shore to shore sped many a lovely shape
Of sylph-like form, whence softest music welled ;
Though neither steam nor uproar did escape,
Each glided on with speed unparalleled.

My host now bade me come to where there stood
A strange machine for which I knew no use ;
He stepped within its curtains, and my mood
Inclined to follow, not, afraid, refuse.

A moment more we rose toward the sky,
And then we cleared the tower, and took a course
As accurately as a bird can fly,
Suspended o'er the town. 'Twas some new force.

The time had now arrived to seek relief
For my o'erburdened mind, which teemed with thoughts,
And question followed question ; still the chief
Remained unanswered, through my ignorant doubts.

At length my host proposed that I should sit
And listen quietly to his discourse ;
He then began with sense and pregnant wit
These wonders to explain, and trace their source.

And first he set himself to make me know
The cause of that sweet music I had heard
When in his mansion, thus, with gentle flow
Of mellow speech, while I remarked each word.

" The powers we have at our command are more
" And greater too than you have ever found ;
" Yet we do use some you had learned to store,
" But our acquaintance with them is profound.

THE HELM OF LIFE.

" That symphony so grand you marvelled at
" Is but the echo of itself as played,
" Preserved in its receptacle by that
" Electric force which Franklin first essayed
" To gather from the stormy clouds that lower
" Low o'er the thirsty Earth that opes her pores
" Innumerable to receive the shower
" Of liquid sweet, ere yet the thunder roars.
" But you shall hear the same another time,
" Arriving here from once far distant lands
" Which are as near us now in southern clime
" As if we held them closely by the hands.
" To travel is a duty. Nay, 'tis more :
" It is an unmixed pleasure, for we fly
" Where'er we list at will, and gain much store
" Of priceless knowledge, boundless as the sky.
" And countries are as neighbour cities now,
" Each striving in a friendly, peaceful way
" To more unravel ev'ry secret how
" To have the powers of Nature under sway.
" 'Tis thus we prosper, ever onward bound
" To bring the Great Creator's love to light.
" How many, many treasures have we found
" Since Wisdom's era dawned with promise bright !
" We speak with all remote parts of the Earth
" By telephonic power, which you knew too.
" We never suffer pestilence or dearth ;
" We can prevent them, and we always do.
" The germs of fell disease, their cause now known,
" We can annul, and regulate our lives
" To keep away and conquer pain, which flown,
" Our days are well employed till death arrives.
" The World is one great family of Man,
" Progressing e'er, and always nearer brought
" By wondrous means of intercourse that span
" The whole terrestrial Globe, with marvels fraught.
" We now hold converse strange, by means of signs,
" With one most beautiful bright distant world,
" Peopled by blessed beings love inclines
" To notice our appeals by lights uphurled.
" It is the planet Venus, which we brought,
" Quite recently, within so near a sight
" That we are all its striking features taught,
" And find ourselves well known by means of light.

THE HELM OF LIFE.

“ Its people seem o’erjoyed that we at last
“ Can recognise their signs ; an era new
“ Dawns on our Globe. It casts behind the past
“ As naught compared to this ; yet thence we drew

“ Our first beginnings of this wondrous time
“ Which gives us such discoveries as these,
“ When planet speaks with planet ; thought sublime
“ That makes despairing doubt entirely cease.

“ As some great ship o’er Ocean’s vast expanse
“ Sailed solitary on, with nought around
“ Save sea and sky and sky and sea again,
“ And haply, dim with distance, vessels found ;
“ At length comes some companion o’er the main ;

“ With mutual delight the signal flags
“ Are shown with greetings glad ; though language strange
“ Prevents a closer intercourse, each lags,
“ Full loth to part, with widely diverse range :

“ So seem we now, who through all time gone by
“ Were lonely thus, and found no kindred sphere
“ Except the dull, cold Moon with mountains high
“ And rugged face ; no prospects there to cheer ;

“ And when we were despairing e’er to find
“ New fields for that research which makes our lives
“ A pleasure, and rejuvenates the mind,
“ Lo ! this grand planet with its aid arrives.

“ Be patient ; you shall see this sight anon
“ When Night hath cast a shadow o’er this Globe,
“ And luminous each World from its own Sun
“ Doth serve to clothe the Heav’ns with starry robe.

“ But now, behold ! the Ocean ’neath us rolls,
“ The Mighty Civilizer of the Earth ;
“ You navigated there with steam from coals ;
“ We use a power of vastly greater worth.

“ Electric energy impels us on
“ With wondrous speed, and comfort unattained
“ By your great rocking hulks ; their day has gone ;
“ Superior means succeed those that have waned.

“ The same unrivalled force o’er all the lands
“ Propels our engines, saves us valued time,
“ Prevents all drudgery, and still expands
“ Its endless uses to a height sublime.

THE HELM OF LIFE.

" These wings, wherewith we now so freely sail
" With sure and speedy course o'er land and sea,
" Are set in motion, and defy the gale,
" By stored supplies of Electricity.

" It permeates all life, and is its source ;
" Its sympathetic current flows through all ;
" Like Light, it emanates from that Great Force
" Who first evolved Existence at His call.

" You have observed the brightness, ay, the bliss,
" That marks our era greater than the past,
" But not to means alone attribute this ;
" By manners mainly hath our age surpassed.

" For Virtue crowneth Knowledge with a power
" Of Self Control, without her friendly aid
" Impossible, whereof each conq'ring hour
" Doth teach to win, whate'er may be essayed.

" A people that has lofty onward aims,
" That exercises Intellect and Heart
" In all their best and kindest aspects, claims
" To make the world one scene of noble Art ;

" To reach the highest goal that Nature grants,
" And, ever striving upward, gain a place
" Undreamed of in the olden times, whose wants
" Were immature, unworthy of our race.

" Have you not seen and known in your own age
" That germs were springing into life and strength
" Whereof the outcome must the world engage
" In such a work as we perform, at length ?

" As some grand Temple on a favoured site
" Rose slowly up, whose Architect alone
" Knew aught of its design ; the workmen toil
" By his direction, till the building grown
" Doth tower magnificent above the soil.

" The labourers themselves stand wond'ring by ;
" Eye with astonishment the great result
" Of their own handiwork, and then know why
" They used their skill thereon, and pleased exult :

" So seems this Earth, which, when the light first gleamed
" Upon its crude foundations, was a waste ;
" No signs of Art o'er all its wild face beamed ;
" No loving hands with jewels Nature graced.

THE HELM OF LIFE.

“ But Man, created for this special task,
“ When Intellect with goodly influence ruled,
“ Built up this lovely World, yet oft did ask
“ Why he should in such arduous toil be schooled.

“ What blissful thoughts light up the mind of him
“ Who looks beyond the sphere where now he moves,
“ And feels how full the Future’s cup shall brim
“ With joyous flow of Beauty, which he loves !

“ How he may look upon this World he left,
“ With loving interest, and calmly note
“ Its constant progress till, by Virtue cleft,
“ All Falsehood fall, and Truth to light be brought !

“ For like a fragrant rose her petals opes,
“ To meet the beams she loves, with gladdened smile,
“ So shall the Truth in beauty crown the hopes
“ Of patient Man, who tended her the while.

“ Thou knowest when, with grief and sorrow rife,
“ The weary soul despairs, and fain would die,
“ The Sun of Virtue tips the hills of life
“ With golden Hope, and direst Evils fly.

“ Mayst thou be comforted throughout thy days,
“ For all the disappointments Man may know,
“ By shining e’er from those reflected rays
“ With gentle Goodness shedding pleasant glow ! ”

He ceased ; his words still linger on my ear ;
His voice still sounds in accents firm and clear,
Replete with sweetness, gemmed with precious thoughts,
A gen’rous stream which some great source imports.

III.

Meantime, returning towards the city’s heights,
We left the Ocean, and, by graceful flights,
Th’ aerial bark regained the mansion’s tower
Whence it had sailed, and proved its useful power.

The day was waning in the glowing west ;
The Sun’s bright orb there sunk, as if to rest ;
But such a glory lingered where he fell
As told a rising grand from such a knell.

Clouds bathed in crimson flecked the western sky,
Or formed with gold-red streaks a canopy ;
Where’er a piece of heav’n peeped between,
It shone a sapphire-blue or daintiest green.

THE HELM OF LIFE.

Below us, all around, the city lay,
Resplendent with the touch of parting day,
Its peerless structures glowing as a rose
That blushed, kissed by the sun ere his repose ;
And mountains, islands, sea, with heav'n did vie
To speed the parting monarch of the sky.

Awhile we stood admiring all the scene,
Until the twilight, with her look serene,
Drew o'er the heav'ns her modest, dusky veil,
And stars began to peer, with faces pale.

Then swift descending, hand in hand, we gained
The spot whence first we rose ; I gazed enchained
By all the vast magnificence around ;
Each glance disclosed new signs of art profound.

With calm, clear light, and soft as that of day,
Bright lamps of massive silver showed the way.
We passed within the entrance of the room
Where we had rested in the pleasant gloom.

And here sweet accents struck upon my ear,
Reminding me of all that was most dear ;
The honeyed tones of woman's gentle voice,
Reciting verses couched in language choice.
The end attained, there was a moment's pause,
And then a little round of glad applause.

My host, with silent step, approached the door
Whence came these sounds, and, stepping in before,
He signed to me to follow. I obeyed.
A charming group was to my gaze displayed.

A lady lovely, and with youthful look,
Was seated, holding in her hand a book ;
Around her form her graceful garments flowed
With easy elegance, pure taste that showed.

Her calm, bright brow betokened lofty thought ;
Her grand, dark eyes her noble nature taught ;
Her well-formed nose, and sweet, small mouth that smiled,
With milk-white teeth, expressed her good and mild.

And close beside her stood a handsome girl,
In beauty lily-like, a lovely pearl,
Whose golden hair like silken meshes fell
Upon her shoulders, but such grace did dwell
In all her movements as did dazzle sight,
And make her seem an angel-shape of light.

THE HELM OF LIFE.

Encircled by her arm a sweet-faced child
With intellectual eyes upon us smiled,
A pretty emanation sent from heav'n
To bless those hearts to whom in love 'tis given.

With gentle force she raised the circling arm
That held her in its clasp, and, with a charm
Of manner most enchanting, kissed the face
Of her who freed her from the close embrace.

And then she paused, and all uncertain stood,
As if to run and greet us was her mood,
But, by her innate modesty constrained,
A stranger's presence her advance restrained.

Near her there sat a splendid, dark-eyed youth,
And two sweet-featured boys, whose faces truth
And honour shone upon, as clearly writ
As strength and grace were shown in limbs well-knit.
The lady rose, and laid her book aside,
And, speaking softly, towards my host did glide.

" My Iomel ; I did wait for thee
" With longing heart and wistful eye,
" And, when thou cam'st not home to me,
" I, anxious, long conjectured why.

" But now I see thy noble heart
" Hath been employed in kindly deeds.
" I know not, stranger, who thou art ;
" My mind my husband's favour reads.
" Then welcome to our humble home,
" And peace and friendship with thee come."

" Nesama," Iomel answered then,
" I hastened home to meet thee here,
" But duty has a claim on men
" Which oft postpones their thoughts most dear.

" This worthy stranger wandered by,
" Not knowing whither he might go ;
" I led him in, and hence did fly
" To him our city's sights to show,
" And late we lingered o'er the scene
" That glistened in the sunset's sheen."

" Thy work was good," Nesama said,
" And may the stranger profit well
" By what he sees, that, when hence sped,
" He may the useful moral tell.
" My sweet Nehara, kindly greet
" This knowledge-seeker as 'tis meet."

THE HELM OF LIFE.

The bright-faced girl, with outstretched hand,
Advanced to where I charmed did stand,
And with an aspect mild, divine,
She placed her small white hand in mine ;
Then asked my name, in thrilling tone.
I answered, " Hayah ; so 'tis known."

" Dear Elion, Zohar, Mäalah,
" Give welcome to our honoured guest ;
" Nesica, kiss his silvered brow,"
Said Iomel, " lean upon his breast.
" For Hayah cometh from afar
" To learn what Future's prospects are."

They rose and greeted me in turn,
With courtly grace and kindly speech ;
Ah ! would that such our youth might learn,
And would that such our schools might teach ;
And sweet Nesica kissed my brow ;
And linked in love the Then to Now.

" Now, Hayah," Iomel said, with accent kind,
" Be seated, and explain in graphic terms,
" To edify these boys, your age's mind,
" The then existent manners, faiths, and germs ;
" For, though we read and know your time's events,
" Your tale will more amuse than books' contents."

Thus urged by him, and by the earnest looks
Of all the rest, expecting me to give
Minute accounts to supplement their books
With gestures that describe, and words that live,
I turned my tongue to well-appareled speech,
And strove to entertain, and not to teach.

" The silver rim that edged the waning moon
" Shone pendent in the dawning's changing sky ;
" A single star that piloted her on
" Gleamed brightly near, as 'twere in Heav'n an eye.
" The air was cold and clear, and quiet reigned ;
" All Nature slept, and night but then had waned.

" Far to the West Pirongia sat enthroned
" In rugged majesty of peak and cleft,
" While Kaikepuku's solitary mound
" Stood out just southwards of him, to the left.
" The streets of Cambridge echoed to my feet,
" As I trudged quickly on, a friend to meet.

THE HELM OF LIFE.

“ For he and I to take a journey long
“ Were bound, and had engaged a vehicle
“ With driver for the road and horses strong
“ That knew their work and all the way full well ;
“ And, to attain our resting-place ere night,
“ We started in the early morning light.

“ A frosty mist assailed us as we crossed
“ The bridge where Karapiro's narrow creek
“ Restrained its course and, ceasing to be tossed
“ In tortuous descents, did slowly seek
“ The grand, dark-blue Waikato whirling on
“ With rapid, sweeping flow its course upon.

“ The crimson standard of the rising Sun
“ Streamed o'er the eastward hills in gilded folds,
“ Announcing his approach, whose warmth begun
“ The frost soon melts, and he dominion holds ;
“ For morn advanced apace when we did gain
“ The stretch of road extending through the plain.

“ Soon on our left the Mangakawa hills
“ We passed, and, skirting by the river's bank,
“ O'er short, unequal spans of road our wheels
“ Rolled onward, and in mire in places sank.
“ Great Maungatantari, upon our right,
“ Reared up in savage pride his bushy height.

“ He looked o'er all the plain with kingly mien,
“ And claimed attention from the country round
“ Beneath him far and wide, and crowned the scene,
“ Standing as if to mark where he had found
“ An area large for industry to tame,
“ And pointing out his towns to all who came.

“ Then o'er great plains of yellow grass we drove,
“ Wild as the hills beyond, and crossed small creeks,
“ Until up Mangaiti's slope we strove
“ As darkness fell, and, 'mongst its broken peaks,
“ We reached our resting-place, by natives kept,
“ A house of wood, and there that night we slept.

“ Next morning, starting o'er the frosty ground,
“ We threaded our descent the other side,
“ And through a dreary plain our course we wound ;
“ At length the blue Waikato we descried.
“ We crossed the bridge below a rushing fall,
“ A spot they then did Atiamuri call.



THE HELM OF LIFE.

“ Beyond again we climbed o’er bushy heights,
“ And left the plains behind, a yellow waste,
“ But here we saw afar a sight of sights.
“ Twin snowy mountains now the prospect graced.
“ Like Heav’n-sent clouds of glory high they rose,
“ And all their rivals topped, in grand repose.

“ Descending now, we drove along the road,
“ With wild and rugged country all around,
“ Till pillared smoke an active ngawha showed,
“ A min’ral spring fierce boiling in the ground.
“ Then, turning, on our eyes a lovely scene
“ Burst beautiful, and bright with azure sheen.

“ Below us stretched a glorious deep-blue lake ;
“ There nestled on its bank a little town ;
“ A point that jutted from the west did break
“ The waters clear, whose banks sloped gently down.
“ Beyond its southern shore extended far
“ The distant ranges of Kaimanawa.

“ Majestic o’er the prospect skyward towered
“ Twin giants, each in snowy vestment draped ;
“ Grand lofty Ruapehu, and, empowered
“ To vent his wrathful pride in flames escaped,
“ The fiery Tongariro, breathing steam,
“ Despite the snow that on his lips did gleam.

“ Ay, this was Taupo, pleasant wonderland,
“ With smoking creeks and steaming springs begirt ;
“ Strewn pumice pebbles fringed its vast lake’s strand ;
“ Untended wastes its village small did skirt.
“ Here deep Waikato, lakefed, took its source,
“ To seek the distant sea, with winding course.

“ New Zealand ! Seaborn ! Country of my birth,
“ I love thy favoured shores, thy genial clime ;
“ No goodlier spot exists in all this earth,
“ Thou herald of the new, the happier time !
“ The gem of England’s vast dominions thou,
“ The crown upon the Southern Ocean’s brow.

“ Here Nature gave to man with lavish hand,
“ Mid scenes of beauty wrought with facile power,
“ Stored min’ral wealth, rich forests, harbours grand,
“ Awaiting silently their useful hour.
“ So great her love for this, her cherished seat,
“ Wild beasts and reptiles thence she bade retreat.

THE HELM OF LIFE.

" A warlike race once held these valued isles,
" Fierce tattooed cannibals, of mixed descent
" From ancient Asiatics, driven miles
" O'er stormy seas, unwitting where they went.
" Throughout the vast Pacific's islands spread,
" Their language marked the coasts to which they sped.

" But Britain's sons came venturous o'er the sea,
" Usurped their land and so transformed their ways
" That they, intelligent and apt, grew free
" From barb'rous habits ; yet another phase
" Of vices followed, from their conquerors learned,
" A baneful blight whence they extinction earned.

" ' As fled our native birds,' thus, sad, they mourned,
" ' Expelled by stranger birds from wonted haunts,
" ' Thus yield we to the newer race, but, scorned
" ' For loving vices new, deserve their taunts.'
" They saw the doom that Fate to them assigned,
" Though free as subjects, hopelessly they pined.

" In Afric's continent dark swarming hordes
" Of negroes clustered ; them the death-mark stamped.
" Extermination, not alone the sword's,
" Claimed them its own where'er the white man camped.
" Australia's blacks saw ships invade their bay,
" Years rolled their course along, and where are they ?

" Was Progress, then, their foe that thus they fell
" Where'er she set her foot with conq'ring march ?
" Or was it evil in themselves did dwell ?
" Or subtle poison did their life-blood parch ?
" Let Commerce tell her deeds of shameless wrong
" That were our age's stigma—tale too long !

" Why Man should use kind Nature's precious gifts
" To mix slow cank'ring potions cursing lives,
" Both those who take and those their practice drifts
" To Poverty's bleak haunts till Death arrives,
" Is such an awful problem that I shrink
" On viewing all the havoc worked by Drink.

" Was this appointed like its brother War
" To rid the Earth of races Time cast off
" As all unfitted, and a useless bar
" To coming ages raising Man aloft ?
" How sad their fate, poor children of the Dark !
" What virtues theirs repaid the vital spark !

THE HELM OF LIFE.

" Yet in that very age we saw the germs
" Of universal institutions spring ;
" The means we used, our conversation's terms,
" Did point to what the future time would bring.
" When first America proclaimed that men
" Had equal rights, the world was changing then.

" Great Washington, thy name will ever shine
" With steady lustre in historic page ;
" Thy wisdom opened up a treasure-mine
" Of Freedom's riches, making new the age.
" Thy country caused old Europe to reform
" To guard herself against rebellion's storm.

" Thou, Bonaparte, grand, potent, mystic man,
" Didst first attempt a wondrous work to do ;
" The great Confederation, thy huge plan,
" Was not by force to be, nor then accrue.
" Thy wars shook Europe, while success was thine ;
" Thy wiser measures make thy mem'ry shine.

" Aforetime Rome, on mighty conquests bent,
" Subdued great tribal nations, and her sway
" Conferred on them improvement, models lent
" Whereby to frame grand States. She passed away !—
" But powers magnificent in Europe rose
" From mingled barb'rous tribes who union chose.

" Where Britain's woad-dyed warriors roamed
" Blest England grew, a noble realm ;
" Round her her billowy safeguard foamed,
" And wary pilots held the helm.
" There Saxon sense and Norman wit
" Matured a State for World-rule fit.

" She sent her ships o'er all the seas
" To find new homes in various climes
" For British enterprise to seize,
" To gain vast strength in after times.
" Her institutions good and sound
" With honoured chain her Empire bound.

" Where'er the English ensign waved,
" O'er all her realm on sea and land,
" Mankind there ceased to be enslaved.
" Her Freedom made her rich and grand.
" Unlike old Rome, she planted States
" With her own race, not delegates.

THE HELM OF LIFE.

“ Supplanting with resistless sweep
“ The savage races peopling Earth,
“ Her sway unrivalled on the deep,
“ She gave dead wastes a brighter birth,
“ And led the World with fost’ring hand,
“ To all the good the Future planned.

“ Had not her poets sung in mighty lines
“ Prophetic of her lofty destiny,
“ And her philosophers proclaimed the signs
“ Of her beneficent supremacy?
“ A bow of promise shone to bless the ark
“ Of Science rescued from a deluge dark.

“ The history of nations reaches back
“ To a few thousand years, and Man’s vast task
“ To beautify the world, and make life’s track
“ Supply the Soul’s demand, did ages ask.
“ Consider what Man was, that such as he
“ Should be deputed to such destiny.

“ In ancient days the few great guiding minds
“ Seemed lifted far above the common throng ;
“ The sympathy of knowledge that men binds
“ Was narrow then, and led the ign’rant wrong ;
“ But when light brightly beams from Wisdom’s East
“ Can any doubt the rays, their minds increased ?

“ Ye noble thinkers of those long-gone years,
“ Who worked to bless mankind with better ways,
“ Your recompense should far outweigh your fears ;
“ Ye still inspire our souls, our minds still raise,
“ And ye shall witness all your heart-wish gained,
“ And ye shall see the long-craved goal attained !

“ For where were Virtue, Order, Science, Art,
“ And all Life’s blessings, comforts, solaces,
“ Had not ye, strong and brave, performed your part
“ Despite mean Scorn, which Queen of Follies is ?
“ Your Courage, Perseverance, Triumphs prove
“ Ye worthy of all generations’ love.

“ But what a Problem menaced all the world
“ In our own time, o’ershadowing all our hopes,
“ The fear lest wild barbarians should be hurled
“ Against the Progress that with Darkness copes !
“ Though vain the apprehension, yet ’twas wise
“ To band our Empire, lest the peril rise.

THE HELM OF LIFE.

“ For Russia, with her wide-extending rule
“ O’er vast unwelded races, did she threat
“ To lead her hordes, with tyrant purpose cruel,
“ To such a horrid slaughter, such a debt
“ Of Retribution on her head did fall
“ As did her very enemies appal.

“ Since Europe ne’er by Tartar, Turk, or Moor
“ Throughout all time was destined to be won,
“ When Mongol swarms o’erflowed God kept secure
“ The work enlightened nations had begun.
“ True Science shall not lose her vict’ries grand ;
“ She shall, triumphant, Nature’s self command.

“ There was more meaning in the mighty strides
“ Of iron messengers and coal-fed slaves
“ O’er Oceans vast, and round the World’s huge sides,
“ Than superficial thought, or schemes of knaves,
“ Did e’er contemplate ; their pursuits were vain,
“ Some deep deceit for narrow love of gain.

“ Those useful stores that subterranean lay,
“ Till Man should know the purpose they would serve,
“ Attained for him the happy power to sway
“ This planet, and to conquer ill did nerve
“ His wayward heart, which e’er the good did seek,
“ Though oft deterred by vacillations weak.

“ O ! True Religion, bracing all the Mind
“ To noble effort winning lofty aims,
“ When shall thy glorious light bless all Mankind,
“ And lead them to the goal their birthright claims ?
“ O ! Life-ennobling Virtue, when wilt thou
“ Impress thy mark on ev’ry human brow ?

“ So many diverse sects did mark our age,
“ Well might the question how a common faith
“ Could all unite vex poet, seer, and sage ;
“ Yet he who wisely hist’ry’s lesson weigheth
“ May view with calm content the prospect sure
“ That Wisdom will evolve one worship pure.

“ For knowledge brings the human mind by steps
“ To understand the Great Creator’s will ;
“ Life’s aim can be attained by hearts, not lips ;
“ Our Life must be our study, learning still.
“ Should Worlds on Worlds require our aiding mite,
“ This Globe expects our help its ills to right.

THE HELM OF LIFE.

“ An ancient race, through all Earth’s countries spread,
“ Survived dire persecutions, falsely based,
“ And saw those faiths which in its own had head
“ Extend their conq’ring power, till they embraced
“ All chiefest nations, and its former land,
“ Deemed sacred, claiming now its future grand.

“ Though scattered, yet united by that bond
“ Of mystic sympathy of creed and blood,
“ A nation’s elements, with clinging fond
“ To Time-proved principles, their outcome Good ;
“ This race must yet its destiny fulfil,
“ Improved by trials to work God’s changeless Will.

“ That England, with her free and noble heart,
“ Gave kindly scope for talents humbly hid,
“ Worth, crushed by fierce Oppression’s foot, to start,
“ And swiftly reaching lofty heights, to bid
“ All eyes admire, did cause her more renown
“ Than aught before that gemmed her lustrous Crown.

“ Rude Myth, blind Superstition, Rites debased
“ Fled like a fog the sun drives from the earth,
“ And Intellect with Truth Religion graced.
“ Man’s Life aspired to be of greater worth.
“ The World craved ardently a Living Guide
“ To shape its aims to rules that would abide.

“ Where Egypt’s ancient pyramids
“ In solid grandeur stood,
“ And her still Sphinx with stony lids
“ Stared blind, nor understood,

“ The onward flow of Commerce forced
“ Its bold, resistless way,
“ And Steam and captive Lightning coursed
“ Their speeding, binding sway.

“ Where India’s heathen temples reared
“ Their aged, time-worn piles,
“ And cruel Jaggernaut careered
“ O’er dupes of priestly wiles,

“ Enlightenment, with shelt’ring wings,
“ Flew peaceful o’er the land ;
“ She told mere slaves of better things,
“ And raised them with her hand.

THE HELM OF LIFE.

" Where China's strange pagodas rose
" In quaint, fantastic tiers,
" And her Great Wall, excluding foes,
" Stretched, grim, two thousand years,

" The breeze of Outer Thought crept in
" To stir the human field,
" And moved a race that pent had been
" By rules that would not yield.

" Her island neighbour, brave Japan,
" With quick, ingenious wit,
" Abandoned her old, jealous plan,
" Her ancient forms did quit.

" Her grand position gave her scope,
" By new industrial means,
" With enterprising lands to cope,
" For profits Commerce gleans.

" The bold Sagacity that urged
" The Anglo-Saxon mind
" From evils old, old countries purged,
" And better modes assigned.

" Fled rav'nous beasts, slunk reptiles vile
" Where'er that step encroached,
" That told their instinct, or their guile,
" Destruction's day approached.

" Despite the ills, despite the crime
" That stained our Age with grief and wrong,
" The radiance of a brighter time
" Lit up its clouds their rims along.

" A time for Hope, not for Despair,
" Called nations to achievements vast
" To better all the race, and dare
" A World's old nature to recast.

" O ! transient Life on sky-bound Ball
" Whose scenes surpass our highest ken ;
" O ! Atom of the Star-sprayed All
" Which lights afar the Home of men !

THE HELM OF LIFE.

" O ! hidden Chain, O ! Love-linked Belt
" That hold'st us in thy wondrous ring,
" Not vain the pray'rs of such as knelt
" For teachings tow'rd's your beams to wing.

" And when the lesson finished
" That I was sent to learn,
" Through Mercy Sin diminished,
" That higher flights she earn,

" My soul with glad emotion,
" No more with evils vexed,
" May cross the mystic Ocean
" 'Twixt this Sphere and the Next ;

" To love thee may I never cease,
" Thou lovely Mother Earth,
" Though there my scope may more increase
" By new and loftier birth."

IV.

Thus briefly-framed, my swift narration
Portrayed the age's forward bent ;
My friends, with praise and approbation,
Expressed their thanks for views I lent.

Then, splendid as to face and figure,
The stately Elion graceful rose,
And, with a manly power and vigour,
Spoke like some mighty river flows :

" Much still to know, much still to seek for
" Remains, though much has been attained ;
" Though Man is frail, his Soul too weak for,
" His Mind's grand promptings must be gained.

" What strong retarding forces conquered,
" That Nature's very self had made,
" Man's Idols, after whom he hankered,
" Your Age's closing scenes displayed.

" Full well didst choose that new-formed nation
" Derived from England's gen'rous veins,
" New Zealand ; all thy expectation
" Is now fulfilled. Renown she gains.

THE HELM OF LIFE.

" Know, where thou stand'st her cities flourish,
" And this is she that thou didst love ;
" A noble race she now doth nourish,
" And towers her rivals all above.

" Here, where ye saw the work beginning ;
" Here, where ye had your destined place ;
" And where ye pictured her thus winning ;
" And where ye beautified her face.

" O ! might'st thou know Man's bright improvement,
" Its ev'ry varied phase and form ;
" O ! might'st thou join us in the movement
" That leads us out beyond the Storm !

" For what was all your striving ardent,
" And what were all your noble trials,
" But labours bringing us regardant
" Their fruits within Truth's precious phials?

" 'Twere not enough to bind together
" All Mankind's races in one bond ;
" 'Twere not enough to augur whether
" The Time should hope on or despond ;

" 'Twere not enough to rest in silence,
" Contented with the things that are ;
" 'Twere not enough to trumpet knowledge
" Of tiniest mite or furthest star.

" No ! What to human hearts the solace
" Of knowing all the wondrous work,
" If not the inner weed-like follies
" May be controlled, nor left to lurk ?

" O ! sweet nobility of nature,
" Why art thou not th' unvaried gift
" Of God to ev'ry human creature ?
" How soon our life its load would lift !

" Yet did ye strive your best to conquer
" The ills that held ye in their clutch ?
" Or did ye wink at wrong and wronger,
" And cherish vipers overmuch ?

" O ! strange that when the world was weeping
" For light, and love, and help, and truth,
" With all ye knew, ye should be keeping
" The noblest knowledge from your Youth.

THE HELM OF LIFE.

" The love of Good should be our glory,
" Be deep implanted in our blood :
" And did ye strive, was't too much for ye,
" To teach your Youth the love of Good ?

" Yet O ! how sweet the path of those is
" Who humbly train, with earnest hand,
" The heart's pure lilies, lovely roses,
" And pluck all weeds out from its land ;

" For, blessed of those they blessed for ever,
" They die anon, and pass away,
" Yet their loved work, forgotten never,
" Remains with stronger, further away.

" Was not Utility your worship ?
" Yet Beauty followed in its track,
" For Beauty claims True Order's heirship ;
" True Art can ne'er its spirit lack.

" Utility is worthy honour,
" Applied to universal use ;
" But *worship* ye the Good that shone o'er
" The death of ev'ry vile abuse.

" Not Science in its grand researches,
" Not Art with imaged beauty fraught,
" Though each on high victorious perches,
" Have Wisdom's weightiest precepts taught.

" Bethink thee ! Is not Life a treasure
" Whose worth consists in living right ?
" Yea ! Virtue is the purest pleasure,
" And Goodness is the clearest light.

" Inseparably linked together,
" In constant unity of aim,
" Those powers, as subtle as the ether,
" Should be, that feed the mental flame ;

" And, hand in hand with Science, Goodness,
" Enlightening all human kind,
" Should rid a world of crime and rudeness,
" And open eyes, though seeing, blind.

THE HELM OF LIFE.

" O ! Hasten on the glorious teaching !
" O ! Spare no strivings to aspire !
" Unite your nations all in reaching
" Those Rules that serve to raise you higher !

" Your Age deserved a Goal so splendid ;
" Your exploits asked rewards so bright,
" But ye yourselves might see Wrong ended.
" Ye might search out and gain the Right.

" Is mean dishonesty a glory ?
" Is thievish trickery a pride ?
" Admire ye him whom crimes make hoary ?
" Is it true wisdom to have lied ?

" O, Men ! Not hands, but hearts are needed
" To bring ye nearer to the best ;
" That Life's foul wrongs may be outweeded,
" Bring Truth and Honour to the test !

" Say not the task must prove a vain one ;
" Dare not to scout the warning voice ;
" Remember all that Heart and Brain won
" For ye, against Fate's seeming choice.

" To serfs and slaves let low inclinings
" Be left, not cherished by the free.
" Ye once were serfs and slaves ; your pinings
" Are changed for strength and liberty.

" Do ye not all admire what's noble ?
" Do ye not hail with joy the good ?
" Knowing the bad begets all trouble,
" Seeing what should not be ;—what should ?

" Then, whilst your freedom helps you, act ye !
" Join in a work of love and right.
" Conquer those ills that have attacked ye ;
" Make the world's future pure and bright.

" And when your efforts have fruition,
" When constant strivings reach their goal,
" A voice of deepest intuition
" Shall whisper gladness to the soul."

THE HELM OF LIFE.

Upon the cadence of his rich-toned speech
Soft strains came swelling, flowing harp-like sounds,
Revealing Music's highest power to teach,
Nehara's fingers gave sweet notes true bounds.

Bright, unseen thoughts played lovingly upon
Her calm, pure brow, in e'er successive rings,
And all her forehead luminously shone
With beams reflected from their lightning wings.

Awhile she paused, then in melodious song
Poured forth the spirit of her inward mind,
And sweetly led the noble theme along
In tones enchanting and in words refined :

"Awake, O ! Music's Genius, to lend
"Thy magic aid to grave each fleeting word ;
"As 'yond the spectrum hues unseen extend,
"So in thy gamut there are notes unheard.
"Reveal thy higher powers, for higher aims,
"And grant to Man the nobler life he claims.

"We are but Infants, 'midst a Belt of Globes,
"Living the Babyhood of Lives to come.
"We are but helpless, innocent ; our robes
"Are suited to our state ;—our tongues are dumb.
"We speak not here the language of the Soul ;
"We know not here the meaning of the Whole.

"Yet courage ! For our World is young and new ;
"Its myriads of revelations grow
"In gradual unfoldings, and the true
"Is e'er more copious the more we know ;
"The lovely germs implanted in our heart
"Form stately trees of Knowledge, Life's best chart.

"The Mind of Man, that mystic living light,
"That still discovers dark and hidden things,
"Strove upward from a state of mist-bound night,
"And upward yet with hopeful strivings wings.
"To live the Life that best begets our bliss
"All must be known that can contribute this.

"Hope, ceaseless, gainful Hope, directs us on ;
"The Future e'er outmiracles the Past,
"And ev'ry onward step means somewhat won,
"And ev'ry vict'ry will eclipse the last,
"Till Life shall reach the perfect stage it should,
"The glorious, blissful triumph of the Good."

THE HELM OF LIFE.

Profoundly thrilling all my inmost soul,
The grand, prophetic strain breathed hope and love ;
Displayed the Universe an op'ning Scroll,
Whose Words were Worlds, around, below, above.

Nesama saw my mood, and gently said,
" The night advances, and 'twere welcome sight
" To Hayah to behold the scenes o'erhead
" That Science yields us, with perfected light.

" Come then, my Iomel, to our fav'rite tower
" Ascend we now, and, with propitious sky,
" Adjust the instruments of astral power,
" And 'yond this sphere by giant vision fly."

To her thus speaking Iomel gave assent.
" Sweet sons," he said, " prepare the needful means,
" And, dear Nehara, thy deft aid be lent
" To lead our eyes to dwell upon these scenes.

" Thy deepest musings, Hayah, ne'er could grasp
" The coming prospects or of Heav'n or Earth ;
" Arise, then, for a volume I unclasp
" That ages yearned for, endless ages worth."

I rose, and followed him, and soon we gained
By swift ascension such stupendous height
I dared not look below with eyes untrained,
But steadfast gazed on Heaven's most lovely night.

The stars like twinkling jewels sprayed the blue ;
Nor less nor greater dazed the tender eye,
While from the Earth's horizon looming grew
The Moon's full orb, a fire-dome in the sky.

Thou Golden Beauty, shedding pleasant light
Upon thy Sister, whom, when black-winged Night
His plumes hath spread o'er all, thou tendest e'er,
Than thee I know not aught I deem more fair.

" Behold ! " cried Iomel, " how the jewelled air
" Is thick besprent with light from distant Spheres ;
" Reflect what problems are embodied there
" That must be solved in Man's progressive years.

" Is there in Nature grander scope than this ?
" The worlds of life that people our own earth
" Are insignificant. Our Soul's self is
" Bound up in all the Universe's birth.

THE HELM OF LIFE.

"Where yon projecting tube scans Heav'n's far lands
"Apply thine eye, and know what later times
"Than thine discover there; how brain and hands
"Acquit themselves where Art aspiring climbs.

"For where yon field of planted Worlds matures,
"Think not thine own the only seat of life,
"Nor thine own frame God's utmost, that endures
"But long enough to wean thee to the strife.

"Nor lightens thy dark mind with such a ray
"Of Truth sublime to tell thee what remains
"Embosomed in Infinity's array
"Of bright revolving Spheres, nor Life explains.

"Yet on thy favoured sight these countless Orbs
"Through endless space bestow their travelled light,
"And bring thee brightness thy mind's mist absorbs,
"That with its gentle glow unveils thy night."

With steadfast gaze uplifted toward the sky,
Expectant through the lofty tube I peered,
When, dawning on my charmed and raptured eye,
Came revelations of new scenes that cheered.

Not artist's brightest dream, nor sculptor's skill,
Nor writer's most imaginative flight
Did e'er approach their beauty, or so thrill
The heart with loveliness so pure and bright.

Our Earth has nought that aptly may compare
With forms so noble, views so fair as these;
Though many beauties, modelled by its air,
Do stud its face, not such its power to please.

And had I gazed for e'er, and still for e'er,
On all that scope of world-face clear and bright,
Still I had found e'er varying features there
That still displayed new phases of delight.

But how the glorious shapes I may depict
O'er all the wide expanse that lived and moved
I know not, for our bounds our words restrict,
And tongues expand as newer things are proved.

Me thus enchanted Iomel soon addressed:
"Say, Hayah, see'st thou aught to please thy sight,
"That thus thou dost continue wrapt in rest?
"What teacheth thee the hemisphere of Night?"

THE HELM OF LIFE.

So as he spoke, from that fair Planet's face
Rose bands of ordered light of brilliant hues,
And, changing frequently, fresh forms did trace,
Nor did their radiance the eye confuse.

They seemed upthrown, from 'midst the moving throng,
With some considered purpose, as for signs,
Or signalled speech, or emblematic song,
Resplendent in their undulating lines.

"Enough!" I said. "What limit to the power
"Of human intellect hath been assigned?
"The same frail animal whom ills devour
"May master world-truths by his lofty mind.

"I see the signals from the starry Realm
"Flash out their splendours to our kindred Earth;
"Nor eye nor soul their constant throbs o'erwhelm,
"For eye and soul may trace their very birth.

"Are they a language, not yet understood,
"That traverses the ether with its waves?
"Methinks they speak a Music many-hued,
"Transforming into light in boundless staves."

Nesama then, by thoughtfulness impelled,
Perceiving how the night encroached on day,
Although our ardent minds were still unquelled,
Suggested needful rest ere morning's ray.

"Another night," said she, "let Mars reveal
"The features of his ruddy-vestured Globe;
"Another night let grander Worlds appeal
"For our research, in God's gem-spangled robe.

"The morrow's duties claim a due regard,
"And are as vital, in our mortal span,
"To solve world-mysteries, and our toils reward,
"As searching out the Universe's plan."

"'Tis well," said Iomel. "Though to Hayah's mind
"This quest if everlasting ne'er would tire,
"Yet rest the human fabric e'er must find
"Is needed to refresh and aid its fire.

"For he must be full weary with the round
"Of e'er successive sights that we impose,
"Though keen delight in novel charms is found
"That makes the mind fatigue's dull sense to lose.

THE HELM OF LIFE.

" With morning's dawn will other works demand
" To be performed, and more shall be explained ;
" Then, Hayah, you shall know what men have planned
" To benefit their kind, since your Age waned.

" What schools, what teachings, what examples serve
" To foster moral life, train heart and mind ;
" What brilliant triumphs all our efforts nerve,
" And how success to Good has been assigned.

" Praise, then, that Wondrous Power who gave frail Man
" The task to raise himself, and frame a World ;
" Who formed from crude beginnings Wisdom's plan,
" A Universe of Worlds from Nought uphurled.

" For as the Earth in destined path revolves,
" And as the Ages bring their fixed events,
" So Man with larger Mind vast Order solves,
" Till Life to him its highest bliss presents."



THE DESTROYERS.

The Destroyers.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

SIR JOHN BRUNTON—*Middle-aged, stern, serious.*

EGBERT MELVILLE—*Young, gallant, and bright.*

VERONI—*Middle-aged, imitates the King in dress, manners and look.*

THE KING—*Middle-aged, slight stoop, and slightly halting walk.*

CARDINAL MAZZOLINI—*Old and grave.*

STROMBOLI—*Bland, mocking.*

PETROVICH—*Polite, solid.*

FLÜGEL—*Bluff, puffed up.*

JACQUES DELAVAL—*Small, conceited, and pompous.*

JOSIKA TIVADAR—*Subservient.*

HASSAN—*Turk, subordinate.*

LORD STANHOPE—*Attaché.*

MORELLI }
SPARAPANI } *Courtiers.*

Footman—*Brunton's.*

Captain of the Guards.

GIOCONDA—*Young Countess, charming and sweet.*

LADY BRUNTON—*Middle-aged, gentle, and handsome.*

THE QUEEN—*About 25, dignified and noble-looking.*

MEG—*Haggard and witch-like.*

*Courtiers, Attendants, Lady Courtiers and Attendants, Officials,
Guards, Soldiery, Populace (men and women).*

The Destroyers.

ACT I., SCENE 1.

Interior of a castle in Lombardy. Arms along walls.

BRUNTON. MELVILLE.

BRUNTON.

Welcome, dear nephew, to your uncle's home !
More welcome singly ; for if you had come
Encumbered with a wife, I tell you plain,
No entrance to my mansion should you gain.
The reasons ! I shall tell you more anon.
It is not time to enter thereupon.

MELVILLE.

I trust I see you well, dear uncle, now,
Though care has traced deep furrows on your brow.
Some mystery, it seems, you hide from me ;
But why should I shun peril, if it be
That here it dog me ? You are e'er my friend,
And with you I can bear it to the end.

BRUNTON.

Well said ! I find your heart as brave in you
As your strong mother's soul was firm and true.
I am enmeshed, and you but come to share
The dangers that surround me everywhere.
A secret ! Well, it is, until 'tis found,
Yet, if you would half guess it, look around.

MELVILLE.

Arms on all sides ! Are you to stand a siege ?
Or are you bound to some beloved liege ?
And must you live in Italy, thus chained ?
Is there some oath by which you are detained ?

BRUNTON.

Good brains, upon my conscience ! Mother wit !
That thus, at once, the nail has fairly hit.
But patience ! When some days are o'er your head
You shall be in the circle of my dread ;
Unless, and this is fair to your young years,
You go, and leave me sole to fight my fears.

MELVILLE.

What, I ! You take me for a dastard boy,
Or think my blood is tainted with alloy
Of aqueous bladders, swelling up with brag,
And straight congealed by terror's crimson rag.
I stand by you, whate'er the danger's form,
Prepared to fall, or weather out the storm.

BRUNTON.

Bold youngster ! Thus I would have done ere age
Had laid its heavy burden on my rage,
And turned my heart to cold, ay, icy gore,
That was so tender, so quick touched, before.

[Enter Footman.]

FOOTMAN.

A lady, sir, awaits without the hall,
Who can take no refusal to her call.

BRUNTON.

Base scullion ! Have I not forbidden this ?
Deny them all, maid, widow, wife, or miss.

FOOTMAN.

But she—

BRUNTON.

“ But she ” ! Has *she* benumbed your wits ?
Or are you prone to such romantic fits
That *she* has charms to win your silly eyes,
And make you brave my anger ? Is this wise ?

FOOTMAN.

But, sir, important news she says she brings,
Affecting life or death ; and awful things
Are written in her face ; she has no charm,
But, like a gipsy witch, looks full of harm.

BRUNTON.

Let this hag come, then ; what may be her game
I know not, care not ; life or death the same.

[Exit Footman.]

Yes, nephew, it has come to this, you hear,
In life for me remains not one thing dear.

MELVILLE.

You deal not, sir, in compliments at least ;
My love for you would wish your love increased.

BRUNTON.

Yes, pardon ; you are young, and quick, and frank,
And I am but a battered, time-worn crank.
Our views from different points perforce must start ;
Yet they may meet when heart goes out to heart.

[Enter MEG.]

MEG.

Good day, kind sirs, I hope I see you well.
You, Master Brunton, can I read your spell ?
Come back to Scotland, whence you have your wife ;
Give up this roaming, this uncanny life.
If of my words you must make light, I beg,
Have pity on her pain whose friend is Meg.

BRUNTON.

Woman, this chatter is not meant for me ;
If she has sent you, answer her that she
Will find me ever firm in my intent ;
Let her abandon hope that I relent.

MELVILLE.

I venture to support the lady's cause,
And ask that her despair may give you pause.

BRUNTON.

Oh ! boy, how rash, how simple is your mind !
What you know nought of, can you straightway find ?

MEG.

He's right ; the heart should be the only guide,
Where loved ones claim their places at our side.

BRUNTON.

Be silent, hag ; my patience has an end.
No prayers of yours, or hers, my strength shall bend.

MEG.

Then listen ! Woe to you, stern, cruel man ;
I hurl upon you my most evil ban ;
I see you bring disgrace and ill on all
That stand for you ; their ruin is your fall.
Beware ! The plots that hold you in their coil
Shall bring you down to earth, whoe'er they spoil.

BRUNTON.

Away ! mad witch. Fool that I am to hear
The ravings of a maniac. Stand clear !

MEG (to MELVILLE).

Young sir, be prudent. You must suffer, too.
I read your courage. Be but good and true.

[Exit MEG.]

MELVILLE.

For whom she pleaded I could merely guess ;
If 'twere your wife, does she deserve redress ?

BRUNTON.

For once and all I now forbid discourse
On this one subject, or my anger's source.
Enough it is I have my reasons grave
For these my actions ; so your protests save.

MELVILLE.

Your word is final ; still, I beg, reflect ;
Deeds form our destiny ; doubts ne'er detect.

[Exeunt].

[END OF SCENE 1 OF ACT I.]

THE DESTROYERS.

ACT I., SCENE 2.

ROME.—*A room in the Palace.*

THE PRIME MINISTER (VERONI). CARDINAL MAZZOLINI.

CARDINAL.

Your excellency, I have come
As 'twas agreed. Know, there are some
Who doubt your efforts for our plan,
And view a turncoat, not a man.

VERONI.

Oh ! such there are, priest ; you and I
Can well afford to pass them by.

CARDINAL.

Yet why not show a bolder hand,
And gain our aim by firm command ?
I ask from you a clear reply,
That I such slanders may deny.

VERONI.

If I should grant you no response,
What terrors threaten my poor sconce ?

CARDINAL.

The world is superstitious still ;
The Church has power the soul to kill ;
And what will men not dare to save
A life that lasts beyond the grave ?

VERONI.

What is this world, I ask you, priest,
(Whose myths are stolen from the East) ?
A doll-show, made for baby gods,
Who smash their puppets up for clods !

CARDINAL.

I like not this, your line of thought ;
It is by evil powers wrought.
Where worlds of spirits meet your gaze,
You follow this material craze.
'Tis not for you to thus abuse
Beliefs not scorned by Turks or Jews.

VERONI.

Ah ! Let me see ! The Hebrews, too,
Will have to suffer from your crew.
What can it serve to persecute ?
The burning sun makes riper fruit.
Squeeze what you can to run the Church,
For gold she should untiring search ;
But let it be by tax or toll,
And let the devil take the soul.

CARDINAL.

Now, who can e'er restrain a mob
That loves to murder and to rob ?

VERONI.

You and your precious decalogue !
A Hebrew code ; a Popish clog !

CARDINAL.

Mock not, Your Grace ; it is not wise ;
Your words to rumours dire give rise.
They say you would the Pope o'erthrow,
Destroy the Church ; and yet I know
Your policy is more alert
Than thus to do the nation hurt.

VERONI.

They say ! Ay ! Let them talk their fill ;
I act. They must obey my will.

CARDINAL.

Then thus. Though Austria grows more weak,
And Russia's Churchmen hourly seek
A pretext to divide her States,
While Germany her fate debates,
A Frenchman must not next be Pope,
Or Italy must lose all hope.

VERONI.

'Tis understood. All my support
Upholds this, as our best resort.

CARDINAL.

I thank Your Grace, and now retire,
Since our chief aim is your desire.

[Exit CARDINAL.]

[Enter STROMBOLI.]

[STROMBOLI spies all round, taps the walls, locks the door,
and comes near cautiously].

VERONI.

Stromboli, in the nick of time
You come. His Holiness sublime
Can not last long, and there are schemes
To gain that height of priestly dreams,
On every side. Italian, French,
And Spanish monks itch on their bench
To see their interest gain the prize ;—
All strive with gifts, and bribes, and lies.
Here Mazzolini comes to me,
So Patriotic eyes the See,
And Italy must fall, forsooth,
If he may not atone his youth !
His mistress was his country e'er,
The only one he yet found fair.
His children who could hope to trace,
Except by some quaint trick of face ?

STROMBOLI.

And so you lead him on to think
At his election you will wink.
True, if we gain not France, but Spain,
Italian freedom ends its reign.
And so you hoodwink, too, the King.
You favour Austria, while you bring
Your every means to gain that point
Which shall her Empire weak disjoint.

VERONI.

Exactly, cousin, I must strive
To keep our nation's heart alive.
I am the brain that holds the wit
To save her body from the pit.

STROMBOLI.

The King must die ! No other way
Can keep us free. You say not nay.
The prince is young ; the power is yours ;
Your regency the State secures.

VERONI.

Hark now ! Stromboli, you I trust ;
No other soul on earth I must.
You know how I e'er ape the King,
In dress, in look, in everything.
Sincerest flattery this to all
Must seem ; but I for him might fall.
See to it ! Let your members know
One little sign I wear, this bow,
A princely order that I won,
And this must stop the risk I run.
Observe ! Suspicion thus I brave ;
For who would think I, who enslave
My very figure to his shape,
Would plot his death, and hope escape ?
What ! Would I walk with step assured,
Full knowing danger I allured,
Assuming thus his very port ?
This would absolve in any Court.

STROMBOLI.

I feel the force of what you hint.
Of caution there shall be no stint.
Confide in me ; my men are true.
The King shall fall, but never you.

VERONI.

Assurance, though, make doubly sure.
For evil done there is no cure.
Come, take the fellow of this sign ;
I had it wrought to equal mine.

[VERONI gives STROMBOLI badge.]

STROMBOLI.

Enough ! This gives a freer hand ;
 It shall be studied by my band.
 To you no peril can accrue ;
 You know me—I am straight and true.

VERONI.

'Tis well ; and when you have attained
 The end, by which so much is gained,
 Demand your due reward. Farewell !
 My duties all my wits compel.

[Exit STROMBOLI.]

[END OF SCENE 2 OF ACT I.]

ACT I., SCENE 3.

LOMBARDY.—*Underground cave below Brunton's castle.
 Table, chairs, cupboard.*

PETROVICH. FLÜGEL.

PETROVICH.

Kak pzhiváyete,¹ mein deutscher Freund,
 It seems to me your watch is just behind.

FLÜGEL.

Wie geht's, mein Russe ? You are oop to time,
 All oders late ; de hour did not yet shine.

PETROVICH.

The hour ! Da, Chas !² The hour has yet to come,
 And, when it strikes, revenge will be to some.

[Enter STROMBOLI.]

Hullo ! Italian. Come sta, my boy ?

STROMBOLI.

Buon di, Petróvich. Vell, I vish you joy.

PETROVICH.

Blagadaryú-vas !³ You, with all your mocks,
 Are always frisky, like Jack-in-the-box !

STROMBOLI.

Corpo di Baccho ! That is not the phrase
 To make vun happy, or vun's spirits raise.
 But I am brave ; I know not fear, not I ;
 I have no dread of earth, or hell, or sky.

1. *Rhythmic Substitute*—How goes it now with you ? 2. *R.S.*—Ah, yes !

3. *R.S.*—Really, I thank you.

PETROVICH.

Prashú prashchénya !⁴ If you're in the lurch,
There are worse enemies than Mother Church.

STROMBOLI.

A fig for priests ! La buona incudine
Non teme il martello ! Not so ? Eh ?

FLÜGEL.

I tink ve joke no more, but get to vvrk.
Ja ! Here come now de Maudyaur und de Turk.

[Enter JOSIKA TIVADAR and HASSAN.]

JOSIKA TIVADAR.

Bócsanatot kérek, hogy haborgattam.⁵

HASSAN.

Ne yapiyorsingiz.⁶ Here come I am.

STROMBOLI.

And velcome both ! Ve need you, Tivadar.
Hassán, you too can help us. Vere's "By gar" ?

HASSAN.

He come by-by. I fetch him ven he not.

STROMBOLI.

And if he don't, vy, let him go to pot !

[Enter JACQUES DELAVAL.]

DELAVAL.

By gar, messieurs, encore une fois, by gar !
I sink I vos a leetle en retard.
Mine vatch, ven she avance, I put her back ;
By gar, zen she retarde. Helas, pauvre Jacques !

STROMBOLI.

Now let us get to business, Delaval ;
Ve could do nothing till you came, dear pal.

DELAVAL.

You can do nussing vizout moi, mon cher ;
Comme on me l'a toujours dit, and everyvare.

STROMBOLI.

Then get the comforts out, great son of Mars—
Absinthe and vodka, viskey and cigars.

[DELAVAL prepares table.]

DELAVAL.

Venez, mes amis ; oui, tout est prêt ; come on !
Ma foi, c'est très charmant ; but soon vos gone !
[They sit down at the table.]

STROMBOLI.

As president, signori, I report
Some news vich I have smuggled from the Court.
You know my influence there, and so can judge ;
If you believe or not, I bear no grudge.

4. R.S.—I beg your pardon. 5. R.S.—If I intrude, pardon ; it not do you harm.

6. R.S.—All you are very well.

PETROVICH.

On vmllosti-oo ministra,⁷ we all know,
And therefore what he hears is always so.

STROMBOLI.

Si, vi ringrazio; I find every turn
That happens in the kingdom; all I learn.
So now, amici, it is clearly fixed,
Since Austria is so completely mixed,
The Germans and the Russians vill attack
Her Provinces, and like a nut she'll crack.

HASSAN.

Mashallah! Vat vill Inghilterra say?
Our Sultan, he at all not like zis vay.

TIVADAR.

Mágyarország⁸ vill be so glad, I tell,
As she vood tink upon a wedding bell.

DELAVAL.

La France, she kick her heel about ze shop,
And ven she turn up right, she come on top.

FLÜGEL.

Und Shermany, she yoost go in kerslap.
Ach Himmel! S'ist unstreitig! Dere's a scrap!

STROMBOLI.

Ve're, most of us, half Yanks, real New York swells,
Republicans at heart; but interest tells.
This fight means money, and helps on the cause;
Meanvile ve pop off kings; down go the laws.

FLÜGEL.

Ich bitte um verzeihung! Das ist so.

DELAVAL.

Mais, oui; cela va sans dire.

[To FLÜGEL.] Mon cher, c'est trop.

[A signal from without.]

PETROVICH.

Our sentry gives the signal. This must be
The wealthy Englishman. He must not see
Who are the men that hold him in their power.
The masks, Stromboli! Ve must make him cower.

[They mask.]

[Enter BRUNTON.]

BRUNTON.

I come as summoned. What would you with me?
When shall the time arrive to set me free
From that mad oath that binds me, as in chains?
And cannot gold release me from my pains?

7. R.S.—The minister supports him. 8. R.S.—Hungary den.

PETROVICH.

Not gold ! We want not always coin from you.
More valued is obedience, which is due
From members of our bond to its great chief,
Who is a benefactor, not a thief.

BRUNTON.

You speak our language well, and yet I feel
You are not English. Now, may I not deal
With your presiding head, who sits mute there ?
This that I ask is only just and fair.

PETROVICH.

In Lombardy do you expect to find
The country swarming with your London kind ?
The world is cumbered with their restless crowd ;
Yet they shall not the world entire enshroud.

BRUNTON.

You are not Irish. But, whate'er you be,
I claim your President should speak with me
As man to man. He understands, I know.
If he speak not, I shall no further go.

STROMBOLI.

Cospetto ! Vell ! You English are so strange ;
For your sake from the first ve did arrange
The man who spoke the best should speak for us ;
And such a trifle raises all this fuss.
Vell, come ! Ve reach the point without delay.
The part ve give you—are you firm to play ?

BRUNTON.

Since needs I must, what boots it me to shrink ?
I am no coward ; I must swim or sink.

[*Noise without.*]

[*Enter MELVILLE. Several of the conspirators rush
towards him.*]

STROMBOLI.

Fermate ! Let us see who is this spy,
Who overthrows our guard, and dares to pry.
Ve must not let him go ! But bring him here !

[*Aside to PETROVICH.*]

Perhaps this is another sheep to shear.

BRUNTON.

Out ! Out ! boy. Come not into this foul hell ;
I dreamed not you would follow, or compel
My actions to enmesh you in the snare
That holds me fast. Begone ! Avoid this lair.

MELVILLE.

Not I ! What dangers you can boldly brave
Are also mine ; my life is mine to save.
Come, fellows, some base plot employs you here.
If I must join you, what have I to fear ?

STROMBOLI.

To fear? Oh! nothing, save a traitor's fate.
If vows are broken, death, more soon than late.

MELVILLE.

And, if I take your oaths, what is my task?
To upset ministries, or don a mask?

STROMBOLI.

No jest, but earnest vurk. To gain our rights
Each man among us when commanded fights.

MELVILLE.

If this were all! But white a negro deems
The baser colour; black the better seems.

STROMBOLI.

Black is the pigment which the eye perceives;
The liver-hearted fool in white believes;
Yet there are colours better than the two,
For noble asses think their blood is blue.

MELVILLE.

Enough of banter; let me know your bond,
That I may utter what I must respond.

[STROMBOLI signs to PETROVICH, who writes, and hands
him the paper prepared.]

STROMBOLI.

In your own blood you copy out this oath,
And if you falter, or to sign feel loath,
From this dark cavern you will ne'er return
To see the daylight; none your fate shall learn.

BRUNTON.

Stay! Take my life and let the youngster go.

MELVILLE.

No, uncle! Come, men! See this blood now flow.
[Pricks his bared arm.]

[STROMBOLI hands him the paper. He writes
with his blood.]

MELVILLE.

'Tis done! I pledge myself to do your will;
What must I undertake? Whom must I kill?

STROMBOLI.

By lot we shall decide who does the deed;
The goddess Fortune helps us in our need.
Here, bold Petróvich; send the dice-box round;
First start a throw; you're lucky, I'll be bound.

PETROVICH.

The highest wins; so Fortune help the bold
To honour and success, more worth than gold.

[PETROVICH throws.]

STROMBOLI.

Two threes, a one ; my Russian, you are weak ;
 Drink up your vodka ; redden thus your cheek.

[*They throw in turn.*]

DELAVAL.

By gar ! Vun six I got, and two, and four.
 Diantre ! I sink ze garçon vood get more.

FLÜGEL.

Zum Henker ! You may take French leave, mein
 Freund ;
 Sechs, fünf und eins. Das Glück to me is kind.

TIVADAR.

Jaj ! Nezze csak ! ⁹ To me it comes dis vay,
 Egy, három, öt ; ¹⁰ he is not me to-day.

HASSAN.

Ajaib ! ¹¹ Him trow me big ; I love him not ;
 Alty, besh, dört. ¹² Him vat you call vun lot.

STROMBOLI.

And now, friend Brunton, try your luck at dice.
 Ve could not let you think of throwing twice.

BRUNTON.

Well, count them ! What care I what spots there be ?
 But stay ! I do ! Pah ! One, and four, and three.

STROMBOLI.

Oibò ! Vy, I myself shall beat that, friend ;
 By practice you your skill of hand must mend !
 A six, a three, a two ; 'tis very poor !
 Come now, young man ; ve'll see if you're more sure.

[*Hands the box to MELVILLE.*]

MELVILLE (*throws*).

Six, six and five ; the duty falls on me ;
 So let me hear to what I must agree.

BRUNTON.

I shall not have you bound ! Come, shun disgrace !
 Use speed, or must I force you from the place ?

[*BRUNTON pushes MELVILLE towards entrance.*]

[*The others draw revolvers and aim at BRUNTON and MELVILLE.*]

MELVILLE.

Be not so mad to compass death for both.
 You must support me. Each is under oath.

9. *R.S.*—Ah ! Look you dere ! 10. *R.S.*—One, tree, and five. 11. *R.S.*—Halloo !

12. *R.S.*—See ! Six, five, four.

STROMBOLI. Cospetto ! Brunton, let the young man free.
He is the visier. None from here can flee ;
And should he gain an exit from the cave,
No power on earth could serve his life to save.

[BRUNTON releases MELVILLE.]

[*They put down the revolvers on the table before them.*]

Come ! No more folly ! Let him now prepare
To learn his mission ; what he has to dare.
The King, my friend, becomes our nation's curse ;
The laws, the taxes, go from bad to worse ;
But greater still than all these evils seem
His leanings to the Pope's fond Spanish dream,
Which favours Austria, Spain and England too,
Although this last need not be harmed by you.
Yet, as a member of our sacred bond,
Your duty is preferred to ties most fond.
To kill him is your task, and, should you fail,
Dire terrors on all sides shall make you quail,
Until, one day, you disappear from sight,
Mysteriously, nor come again to light.
You understand what is for you to do,
Mark well ! Your aim must be both sure and true.
Observe this badge ! I stole it for our ends.
Touch not the man who wears it, though he bends
And ambles like the king. Ve spare his life
To hold him for a hostage in the strife.
Beware ! If he be harmed your life is lost,
And Brunton falls. Beware ! and count the cost.

MELVILLE. I understand your mandates, and am bound
To carry out their terms, though wrongful found.
But, by-the-by, your guard lies there without,
Tied fast with cords ; he would be free, no doubt.

[*Noise of rustling.*]

STROMBOLI. Vat noise is that I hear along that vall ?
Men ! search, and shoot the spy that dares to crawl
Vithin our cave. Let not a soul escape !
Vat is it ? Can you not see any shape ?

[*They throw the light of torches along the wall.*]

PETROVICH. No sign of anything is there to see ;
Some lizard, snake, or reptile it must be.

STROMBOLI. Qualunque sia,¹³ explore now every nook,
And go, unbind our guard. On all sides look.
It may be he could see vat came or vent.
If human, such shall soon the trick repent.

13. R.S.—Vatever 'tis.

MELVILLE.

I gagged as well as bound him, and his sight
Is like a moth's that flutters round a light.

[*Exeunt PETROVICH and TIVADAR.*]

STROMBOLI.

Bold youth ! I like your courage ; but your act
May lose us all, if spies vere here in fact.

FLÜGEL.

Ve heard no step ; dere vas no sound at all.
It is de splash of vater from de vall.

STROMBOLI.

My ears are sharp, as keen as any here,
And spies, not traitors, are the foes I fear.

[*Re-enter PETROVICH and TIVADAR.*]

PETROVICH.

No sign of man or beast can there be found.
The Czech, while there he lay, has heard no sound.
I thought I heard a rustling, when you spoke,
As if it were the crumpling of a cloak.
But such might be a gust of passing breeze,
And that would be most difficult to seize.

STROMBOLI.

Your jokes, Petróvich, savour of your hide,
So very thick ; they should be said aside !

MELVILLE.

One question. I would know what chief I serve.
A worthy chief infuses heart and nerve.

STROMBOLI.

Ve dare not speak his name. His power is vast.
He keeps us all in awe. He holds us fast.

PETROVICH.

As delegates of our most mighty cause,
Above all rulers—

STROMBOLI.

Sects—

FLÜGEL.

Or forms—

DELAVAL.

Or laws—

PETROVICH.

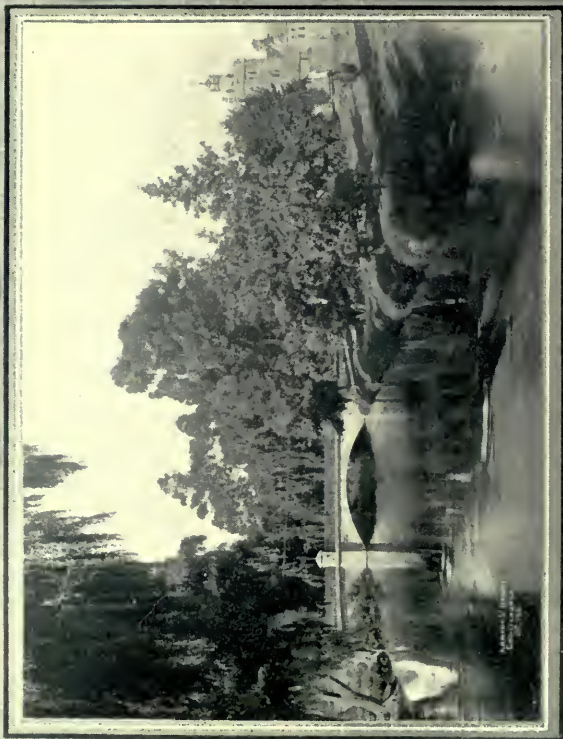
We have authority, in name of all,
To choose by lot the men to win or fall.

MELVILLE.

I must submit. But later shall I know
By whose behest I act against your foe ?

STROMBOLI.

Enough ! Kind Fortune gives a hero's luck
To you. Ask further ven the blow is struck.



DELAVAL.

By gar! A vous; ve drink some toast, mon gar.

[To MELVILLE.]

You got ze vat you call,—vun luckless star.

FLÜGEL (to DELAVAL).

Pfui! Dere you make de wrongest bad mistake.

You qvack in Anglish wie ein tongue-tied drake.

PETROVICH.

Drink now success to our young champion here,
Whose heart is brave, and free from every fear.[*They drink, and pledge one another.*]

STROMBOLI.

Our vurk is over.

[To MELVILLE.]

Hold yourself prepared.

To hear the day your bold deed must be dared.

MELVILLE.

One moment! Ere I go from this, your den,
I ask a pledge from you as brother men.
See here the saviour of my father's life,
Who bears the mark of an assassin's knife
Received in aiding him, and more than that,
Who reared me from a weak and helpless brat,
An orphan, to a useful, hopeful state,
Which I have sacrificed to share his fate.
I give my oath on this condition sole,
That naught of harm, e'en to attain your goal,
Shall light on him, and this, I ask you, swear.
The man I speak of stands before you there.

[*Pointing to BRUNTON.*]

STROMBOLI.

Per Baccho! Bravo! This was finely said.
I boast no heart, but love with all my head
So generous a youth. Yes, ve vill swear.
My men, your voices; cheer this boy so rare.

PETROVICH.

Urá! On slávnýi mályi 14. All agree.

To follow what he asks. Depend on me.

DELAVAL.

By gar! I sink I vood. J'admire les braves.

I love not cowarts; rahzer I vood starve.

FLÜGEL.

Vortrefflich! I vill give my oat to dis.

Potz! Delaval, your Anglish vas amiss.

MELVILLE.

Enough! I ask from all a solemn vow
To guard his life from danger e'er, from now.

14. R.S.—Hurrah! The youth is gallant.

STROMBOLI.

Swear by our sacred cause, and all the powers
That rule the universe, and time the hours ;
By all you love, by all you hate and fear ;
By friends and enemies afar and near.

ALL (*except BRUNTON and MELVILLE*).

Ve swear }
We swear }

MELVILLE.

I thank you, though I would I better knew
Your looks, your glances, by a clearer view
Than you afford ; the face reflects the heart ;
To those who read aright, a guiding chart.

BRUNTON.

O ! boy, with grief you overwhelm my soul.
Why came you to invade this wretched hole ?
To shatter, with a blow, my dearest hopes ;
To bind your fate to mine with tangled ropes ?
My course, so clear before, is now undone.
Alas ! what risks unfettered youth will run.

[END OF SCENE 3 OF ACT I.]

[END OF ACT I.]

 ACT II., SCENE 1.

Room in a villa in Lombardy, richly furnished. Target at one end. Flower-glass, with bouquet in, at same end.

GIOCONDA *with mandolin.*GIOCONDA (*sings*).

The gladsome dawn breaks gently o'er the hills ;
The sky all merry birds' sweet warbling fills ;

Yet I am sad.

The soul, in heaven's most blest ethereal state,
Beset with doubt of other loved ones' fate,

Could ne'er be glad.

How gay the bright days fled, ere him I met,
Whose peril mars my joy, and brings regret

To fill my breast.

I grieve that time was quicker than my love ;
This would have held him, as with fairy glove,

To its behest.

Yet courage must support my panting frame
To dare such things as bring a woman shame,

Or brand her mad.

[*Throws down mandolin. Takes up pistol. Shoots at target.*]

{Enter LILIAN.}

LILIAN.

Music here I heard ;
Wherefore has it ceased ?
Sing me one sweet word ;
Grant me one at least.
Why change melodious lays for noisome sound of arms ?
One to soothe my ear ;
Follow then with more
Tones I hold so dear ;
Yield me ample store.
Reserve your sterner art, and please me with your charms.

[GIOCONDA ceases shooting.]

GIOCONDA.

Dear, I must pursue
This distasteful work,
Since I have in view
Dangers wild that lurk.
No more to-day I sing ; but ask again anon.

LILIAN.

Was the song of love,
Or of tender grief ?
Did it reach above,
Telling of belief ?
Why may you not repeat the theme you were upon ?

GIOCONDA.

Nay ! The mood is past ;
Dreams fly fitful by ;
Each drives on the last
From our mental eye.
May you not cheer me with a pleasant tale ?

LILIAN.

Blithe and gay you seemed,
'Twas but yesterday ;
Ill you sure have dreamed,
Through some evil fay.
Dismiss the fears that cause your heart to quail.

GIOCONDA.

O ! Would 'twere to be done,
My Lilian dear ;
No method would I shun
To quell my fear.
Your sorrows, too, are deep,
And you repress
The pain that haunts your sleep,
You must confess.

LILIAN. What profits it to dwell
On broken joys?
Life's ocean on its swell
Bears us as toys.
One weeps for buried hopes;
Another grieves
For bygone dreams, and mopes
O'er faded leaves.

GIOCONDA. Yet, tell me, can you find,
From some sure source,
What ties your lord may bind
To his strange course?
His nephew, too, enchained
By some dire power,
With calmness merely feigned,
Grows stern and sour.

LILIAN. A dark, mysterious tale
Has reached my ear,
At which I now turn pale
With deadly fear.
A weird and haggard witch,
Who told me true
That I should marry rich,
And then should rue,
Has sent me gloomy hints
That crime import,
But fuller details stints
To shield the Court.

GIOCONDA. From looks and words I stored
I took my cue,
Divined that evil warred
Against these two;
Then, though I know your love
For your proud lord,
You, gentle as a dove,
Loathe gun or sword.
I, loving too, you guess,
More bold than most,
Strove hard till some address
In arms I boast.
Observe yon flower-crowned glass,
And watch me fire;
That central scarlet mass
Provokes my ire.

[Takes up pistol and fires.]

Go! Look, 'tis shattered quite;
Beware of me!
A veteran full of spite
And gallantry.

[GIOCONDA puts down pistol. LILIAN examines flowers.]

LILIAN.

I fear your prowess not,
Most martial maid ;
But, when men must be shot,
Be not afraid !

GIOCONDA.

Hark ! What is that, I ask ?
Look ! Creeping, see
A villain in a mask,
Who makes for me.

[STROMBOLI advances masked.]

GIOCONDA.

Stand back, or else I shoot.

[GIOCONDA aims at him.]

LILIAN.

Help ! Murder ! Thieves !

[LILIAN rushes from room].

STROMBOLI.

Does not my presence suit ?
My heart much grieves.

[TIVADAR and HASSAN advance stealthily behind GIOCONDA. They seize, gag, and bind her. Pistol goes off in struggle. Scuffling and screams outside the room. GIOCONDA faints. They lay her down. Exeunt STROMBOLI, TIVADAR and HASSAN.]

[Enter MELVILLE. He rushes to GIOCONDA and ungags her. She revives.]

MELVILLE.

Gioconda !

GIOCONDA.

Egbert !

MELVILLE.

Who has bound you thus ?
Wandering along in vain adventurous,
Moody with earnest thought, I heard a shot,
And thereupon I hastened to the spot.
Beloved ! Let me first unmake your bonds,
While your fond heart to my caress responds.
My soul rebels to see these lovely hands
All scored and bruised by rough and cruel bands.
Oh ! To avenge the insult here received !
But tell me who your trustfulness deceived.
Had you base robbers kept in your employ,
Or did some ruffian make you his decoy ?

GIOCONDA.

Masked men intruded, overpowered me here,
And first they must have forced to flee, through fear,
My servants all ; for none have since approached.
I cannot say for what they have encroached.

MELVILLE.

And where is Brunton's wife? Has she fled, too?
Ah! Maybe—that—she—tried to succour you;
Yes!—then—they—bound her—left her lie—else—
where.

[*Gioconda turns towards him.*]

A passing faintness! Let me take this chair.

GIOCONDA.

Poor Egbert! Must this secret kill my boy,
My only dear one, stealer of my joy?
Ah! Say what weighs so rueful on your mind;
I could console your cares with counsel kind.

MELVILLE.

I may not! Ah! I feel so strong again!
I long to find what urged these wicked men.
But let us both, in haste, seek Lilian first,
To set her free.

[*Aside.*] My God! I fear the worst.

[END OF SCENE 1 OF ACT II.]

ACT II., SCENE 2.

ROME.—*A room in the Palace.*

THE KING. VERONI. CARDINAL MAZZOLINI.

CARDINAL.

His Holiness is dying. This is sure.
Your Majesty would fain the Faith secure.
This we effect by joining Church and State,
And save the country from a grievous fate.

THE KING.

The Conclave must decide. I have no voice.
It rests with them to make the final choice.
Your Eminence knows well my friendly views,
Yet feels in this there must be no abuse.
Were I a Churchman, all my weight would lean
To Italy's home interests, and wean
The jarring prelates from their futile thought
That safety may through France or Spain be bought.
But Austria is in danger, I detect,
For there each party is a warring sect;
A wild conglomeration rules the realm,
And no strong statesman there controls the helm.
Then Russian aims draw close the Slavic stock,
And Germany would not set back the clock;

Each claims to share the falling Empire's land ;
We now suspect a bold partition planned.
And England still stands silently at rest,
Affords no aid while none dare filch her nest.
We, trembling at tremendous giants' shades,
Dread, every moment, war and hostile raids.
We must have allies in the coming strife,
Or forfeit, once for all, our nation's life ;
So since the British lean to help the weak,
Their strength must be the stay that we shall seek.

VERONI.

Depend on England when the Greeks begin
To reckon calends, or the mayflies spin.
Her navy cruises round all coasts, and spies ;
Her army for our cause she now denies.
What did she e'er for us in times gone past ?
Her eyes beyond all Europe's sphere are cast,
To where her Colonies still bear her sway,
Awaiting when they will be filched away.
The Briton proudly spurns the alien shape,
In higher branches acts the higher ape ;
He loves his language as he loves his wife,
And spells it like he understands her life.
The Russian loves his neighbour as himself,
In hopes to gather in his land and pelf ;
He learns his tongue, assumes his ways or dress,
Then russianises him with bearish press.
Thus Austria's knell is rung ; Bohemia craves
The Czar's strong help, and mad Bulgaria raves,
While Serbia temporises ; Hungary feels
Her Tartar blood boil up at their appeals.

THE KING.

Veroni, you abuse our staunchest friend,
The only power that will our cause defend.
Too fond of epigram, you banish sense
To play your wit against a neighbour's fence.
England was always great and good to us.
Her poets, filled with feelings chivalrous,
From Chaucer down to Shakespeare, thence till now,
E'er favour Italy ; and will, I trow.
Her sovereigns politic, her statesmen wise,
Ne'er stirred against us hostile enterprise.

VERONI.

You check me, Sire, where I have gone too far ;
I chafed at her delay, which can us mar.

THE KING.

You love not England overmuch, I ween.

CARDINAL (*aside to KING*).

Snubbed by an English lord, before the Queen.

VERONI.

Well, let us view the dense array of facts,
To shape a course, and formulate our acts.

THE KING.

This asks reflection. Haste may ruin all.

[*Knock. Enter Court official. He presents a letter to the KING.*]

Retire and wait. Anon a Council call.

[*Exeunt VERONI and CARDINAL.*]

[*The KING opens letter.*]

THE KING (*reading letter*).

To pluck Veroni's badge, as if in sport !—
But why ?—Veroni is not loved at Court ;
Perchance against him they have formed a plot,
Of which the key is centered in this knot.
—And wear it !—Ah ! That comes more home to me.

[*Enter QUEEN.*]

Lavinia, dear, my counsel you shall be.

QUEEN.

What troubles you, Vittore ? Let me hear ;
This letter with its superscription queer ?

[*Leaning on his shoulder.*]

How runs it ? Ah ! I see ; a mystery hides
Behind the lines ; some secret plot betides.

THE KING.

The same I gather ; yet I know not how
To take its intimation. Come, endow
Your husband with your quick perception's force,
And trace the fateful warning to its source.

QUEEN.

Too much for me ! My interest is at stake.
My intuition cannot here awake.
Gioconda, the Contessa, is in Rome ;
My former schoolmate, having left her home
To make the capital her future place ;
Resort to her, a prophetess of race.
There is a power within the human mind,
A gift conferred on certain of our kind,
Called prophecy—a clear foreseeing power,
Which knows events before they have their hour.
Gioconda has this talent in her soul,
Not supernatural, but in control.
It seems to me an observation keen
That views the future through its present screen.

THE KING.

And where is this most wondrous, magic maid ?
And what of treasure, or of honour, paid
Will buy her ? Can I see her now or soon ?
This complication makes her art a boon.

QUEEN.

I need but call her. She is there without.
Gioconda ! Come and solve a little doubt.

[Enter GIOCONDA.]

GIOCONDA (*to the King*).

My liege, I greet you kindly. Am I here
To formulate a ball, or quiz a peer ?
Your looks are serious. I read some plot ?
To upset a dynasty, or not ?

THE KING.

Most potent maid, I need your magic skill
To find if this epistle means some ill.
Ask gold ; ask station ; ask for what you please,
But set my wild suspicions first at ease.

GIOCONDA.

My Queen ! Lavinia ! What means this appeal ?
Myself for this I do not equal feel.
I have no magic in my humble will,
Nor powers wonderful, nor potent skill ;
I want no wealth ; position now I hold ;
Why ask me, then, this mystery to unfold ?

QUEEN.

Yet, when you were a little fairy girl,
You named me Queen, and placed a crown of pearl
Around my childish temples, while we stood
Among the sweet wild flowers in the wood.

GIOCONDA.

This was but children's playfulness, and then
I knew not yet at all the world or men.

[*To the King.*]

Stay ! Show me that epistle.

[*The King hands it to her.*]

This, I guess,
Is what provokes your trouble. Strange address !
I know the writing. This is from a friend.
Perform her mandates. All shall then well end.

[*Aside.*]

'Tis Meg who sends this strange request to him.
She sees, then, clear what seemed to me but dim.

THE KING.

Oh ! lovely angel, who, so modest, try
Your marvellous prevision to decry !
What great reward can I confer for this,
Whose delicacy will not come amiss ?

Act II.]

THE DESTROYERS.

[Scene 2.

GIOCONDA.

I used no art, but Nature's own good wit.
No recompense I ask, but shall when fit.

QUEEN.

Accept my thanks, Gioconda, girl so rare ;
To part with you I must not, cannot bear.

[END OF SCENE 2 OF ACT II.]

[END OF ACT II.]

ACT III., SCENE 1.

ROME.—*Room in mansion.*

GIOCONDA, MELVILLE, BRUNTON.

BRUNTON.

No trace of Lilian yet ?

MELVILLE.

No clue.

GIOCONDA.

No tidings we can get.

BRUNTON (*to* GIOCONDA).

Nor you ?

GIOCONDA.

I have my hopes still left—

BRUNTON.

In vain !

GIOCONDA.

That you are not bereft.

BRUNTON.

Oh, Pain !

Alas ! That I resolved, so rashly fond,
To drive her from my heart, and not respond
To her appeals. I wished to save her life,
And keep her far from all the gloom and strife.
It could not be ! Her safeguard was my love,
And I am punished by the powers above.

GIOCONDA.

Now, hear me ! Lose not hope, the last resort.
Full many a ship is safely steered to port
By confidence, where weakness and mistrust
Had lost her. Courage ! Rule yourself you must.
My influence at Court is growing fast ;
I stand to solve the mystery at last.

BRUNTON. Deceive me not! No comfort is derived
From false encouragement. It warps the soul,
And fires the heart with kindling wiles contrived,
Then leaves all cinders, for its flaming coal.
Your outlook is too sanguine, and you seem
To rest on trifles all a life's regret.
How can I trust to fancies, or a dream ;
On courtly favour such a value set,
As if an earthly power, with heavenly gifts, were met?

GIOCONDA. 'Tis not deceit. If I may not console,
Let facts be heard, and these may half convince
Your wavering mind, but promise to control
Your anger, else you sacrifice our Prince.
Veroni is the rock on which you split.
He is the secret fosterer of a plot
Which injures you, whomever else it hit.
Believe this true, or suffer much if not.
The proof I have not now. It shall ere long be got.

MELVILLE. You read the spell as I have thought it out.
Long have I pondered on the mystery's cause ;
Now I am clear ; I entertain no doubt.
But as to Lilian's fate, this gives me pause.
Like you I would so gladly comfort bring
To cheer my uncle's heart, and make him feel
That Lilian lives, that hope is in the King.
Proud as he is, before him he would kneel.
But this foul plot spares none! 'Tis wheel within
a wheel.

BRUNTON. I thank you, nephew. You have cheered me well ;
For, like my doctor, when he gives me o'er,
You put fresh life in me, and break the spell
That bore me down, whereby I was full sore.
Quite broken with the blow, I weakly quailed,
Believing all was lost and past recall ;
But, with the little hope in me assailed,
I find my powers revived, prepared for all.
Though if she live not, I shall have revenge or meet
my fall.

[Enter MEG, and lady attendants.]

MEG. The Pope is dead. All Rome is filled
With plots, and fraud, and lies.
Some blood, I read, will soon be spilled ;
Some blood for vengeance cries.
Not far from here I see the man
Who suffers for his fault.
Destruction follows fast his plan,
And, started, will not halt.

BRUNTON. Cease nagging, witch, I cannot bear
To listen to your tongue.
Why should you come my heart to tear?
I am enough unstrung.

[Exit BRUNTON.]

MEG (*aside to MELVILLE*).
A word with you I fain would get,
But only when alone.
For murder done blood must be let.
All will your deed condone.

MELVILLE.
Await my leisure. I shall hear
What you have come to tell.
Not long I'll keep you. Linger near.
I know your message well.
[Exit MEG with lady attendants.]

MELVILLE.
O! sweet Gioconda, give me one fond kiss
To comfort me in this dire time of pain.
Your prescience wonderful ne'er goes amiss.
Your lucid foresight may our freedom gain.
Lift now your lovely eyes to mine, and see
How much I cherish you, so dear to me.
I am in perilous condition held
And may, perchance, ne'er see you, dear, again.
Take this small token. If I am compelled
To die, remember me, but not with pain.
[Gives her a casket.]
Oh! Must I part from you, who are my life,
My only love, my own, my promised wife?
[They embrace.]

GIOCONDA. No! No! You shall not die, or I shall, too.
Fear not, I can and shall deliver you.
I go to lay such plans as keep you safe.
Meanwhile be calm; with anguish do not chafe.
[Exit GIOCONDA.]

[Enter MEG.]

MEG. Go, shoot and fear not. When you will,
A crime-stained traitor's blood you spill;
The murderer of your uncle's bride.
Oh! If you spare him, woe betide.
Aim sure at where you see no sign;
For I shall foil the foul design;
Veroni is the head of all
The treacherous band who plan your fall.
Heard you that rustling in the cave
Where you resorted, all too brave?
'Twas caused by my escape; but now
I track them all. Ask me not how!

MELVILLE.

But wherefore? What so great can be
Your object? It was not for me.

MEG.

'Twas not; but for the love I bore
To Lady Brunton, now no more.

MELVILLE.

I understand. But, ere you go,
What follows when I strike the blow?

MEG.

Arrest and trial; deliverance then.
The King shall know what moved these men.

MELVILLE.

'Tis but a narrow thread of trust;
But shoot the man I shall and must.

MEG.

If not, you surely lose your life.
Farewell! I love your future wife.

[Exit MEG.]

[END OF SCENE 1 OF ACT III.]

ACT III., SCENE 2.

ROME.—*Exterior of the King's Palace.*
(Preparations for procession.)

(Guards. Citizens, men and women. Soldierly drawn up.)

VERONI and GIOCONDA come out from the entrance of the Palace,
and stand there observing the people.

VERONI.

Contessa, yes, I love you. Hear me now;
Would I might place a Crown upon that brow!
If the King died, would you desire the throne
As Queen, with me as Minister, my own?

GIOCONDA.

This pretty badge you have, a princely thing,
To-day I'll wear it, you some luck to bring.

[GIOCONDA takes off the badge.]

VERONI.

Oh! No! My jealous wife would storm and scold.
Return it! You shall have a Crown all gold.

[VERONI tries to snatch it.]

[GIOCONDA hurries into the Palace. VERONI turns to follow.
BRUNTON comes forward and shoots him. VERONI falls.
Guards seize BRUNTON. MELVILLE hurries forward.]

MELVILLE (*To Captain of Guards*).

Arrest me, too ; his partner in the crime !

CAPTAIN.

So, so ! My young cocksparrow ; just in time.

[*The Guards surround them. The people rush forward to seize them. The Guards repel the people. STROMBOLI and PETROVICH hurry in from different sides. The KING appears, at a window of the Palace, wearing the badge.*]

STROMBOLI.

The King is killed ! Come, seize the murderer there !
The young one is the culprit. Let us tear
His dastard carcase into thousand shreds,
And vengeance fall on all foul traitors' heads.

[*The crowd makes another rush, and is again repulsed.*]

[MEG hurries from the Palace, approaches the Captain of the Guards, and hands him a list.]

MEG.

Instructions from the King ! Arrest all men
Described in this. Let police search every den.
There ! There stand two ! Secure them on the spot,
But keep your prisoners safe from stab or shot.

[*The Guards arrest STROMBOLI and PETROVICH. They march away with the four prisoners, followed by hisses and groans from the crowd, who run towards them. The Guards fix bayonets, at the word of command.*]

[*Exeunt Guards, and most of the crowd.*]

[MEG re-enters Palace. The KING and GIOCONDA come out to VERONI.]

VERONI.

I die ! Sire, grant your pardon to a wretch
Whose wild ambition, with unholy stretch,
Aimed at your life, and, soaring after power,
Has immolated him, at that same hour
Which might have sacrificed yourself, if fate
Had not decreed this ending of his state.
Beware ! Plots crowd around on every hand.
Strict vigilance to all your guards command.
When I am dead, no man remains to guide
Our Italy that is my only pride.

THE KING.

Veroni, I was warned, but listened not.
How could I think that you so soon forgot
The favours I have showered upon you thick ?
This horrid climax wounds me to the quick.

VERONI.

When politics are in the scale with soul,
They weigh the most, and, to attain his goal,
The Statesman looks beyond all friendship's ties ;
His conscience is subservient to his prize.
Farewell ! I leave you all my plans undone.
My course on earth is now completely run.
A lie I lived.—I suffocate—I choke !
A hole I'll lie in soon. Excuse the joke !

[Dies.]

[Enter Doctor and attendants. The Doctor examines VERONI.]

THE KING.

Dead ! Thus he ends ! Poor broken mortal clod,
That so superbly scorned the earth he trod.

[To attendants.]

Remove him ! Where I deemed I had a friend
How fearful is the truth that marks his end.

[The attendants carry him off.]

O ! Flattery, thou lying bane of Kings,
Worst of all faults, and basest scum of things,
Why are we prone to listen to thy voice,
And woo thy siren shape, by fatal choice ?
Now hast thou taught me where true merit lives,
How sterling frankness honest counsel gives.
No more thy mocking guile shall haunt my way.
I know thee now, and hold thy power at bay.

GIOCONDA.

The prisoners, Sire, demand an instant care.
The Englishmen I pray that you will spare.
Enquire the causes of the daring deed,
And you shall find of pity they have need.

THE KING.

Your prayer is granted, ere I hear the fact.
Do I not owe you all for your kind act ?
Reward you once refused, but claimed a right
To ask some favour ; you I now requite.

GIOCONDA.

My gracious liege, I thank you for the grant.
These two are men whom no base fear would daunt,
Nor any ill intent impel to crime.
Their story illustrates a love sublime.

[They re-enter Palace.]

[END OF SCENE 2 OF ACT III.]

1. Bugione. Nel bugio.

THE DESTROYERS.

ACT III., SCENE 3.

ROME.—*A Vestibule in the Palace.*

MORELLI. SPARAPANI. LORD STANHOPE.

MORELLI.

All speaks of war. The Russ essays his strength,
The Aleman is stirred throughout his length ;
A Spanish Pope provokes the Gallic ire,
And Europe is involved in warlike fire.
The Russian Luther is too bold to stand ;
He emulates Tolstoi, that bygone brand.
A foreign war must force the people's mind
To turn from him, for Church and State combined.
This is the policy the Czar pursues,
So claims all Slavic states as Russia's dues.

LORD STANHOPE.

The King has wisely called on England's power
To help him in this most disastrous hour ;
If Austria fall, no check will intervene
To save his kingdom from this compact mean.
Grant that Trieste is ceded to your King,
(This has been offered ; is a settled thing),
You gain, by our alliance, ancient ground,
Then Abyssinia, by us brought round.

SPARAPANI.

We trust in England. What have we to gain
By Cossacks, or by Prussians ? We remain
Italians only through your strong support,
Repelling tyrants of a cruel sort.

MORELLI.

The English prisoners, who were concerned
In compassing Veroni's death, and earned
An ample pardon, after trial, must come
Before the King to-day. It seems that some
Strange circumstances are to come to light ;
I know not what the mystery is aright.

LORD STANHOPE.

It will be pleasant tidings ; for the King
Is good and generous in everything.
I hear Stromboli and his band receive
Severest judgment. None for this will grieve.

MORELLI.

Emilia Galotti you have read,
Where Marinelli plays a part so dread ;
Reluctantly I give the German right,
Who sketched the character with no mean spite.
Our Italy produces, now and then,
Such vile, insidious snakes, in form of men,
But nobler figures fill our annals well,
A Dante, Manin—more than I can tell.

LORD STANHOPE.

Admitted. Yes, a race of lordly minds,
The Kings of Art, of Poesy, one finds
Throughout your records. May it e'er be so !
We love the soil where such productions grow.

SPARAPANI.

We thank you for your graceful compliment,
And recognise your nation's good intent.
Come now, the time approaches to appear
Before the King, these tidings strange to hear.

[END OF SCENE 3 OF ACT III.]

ACT III., SCENE 4.ROME.—*Throne-room in Palace.**The KING and QUEEN enthroned.**Nobles, Court Officials, Ladies, Lady Attendants.*

THE KING.

My courtiers all, we summon you to-day
To witness something rare in Royal grace ;
A charming scene we soon before you lay,
Which makes us proud to hold our kingly place.
I ask my Queen to take the office kind
Of benefactress to the sore distressed.
Bid the attendants now, at once, unbind
The prisoners, Veroni's foes confessed.
In all haste bring them here before the throne.
Give them to understand we fix their fate ;
Let them not think we would a crime condone,
If as a crime their deed deserve to rate.

[Exit two Court officials.]

[Re-enter, with attendants guarding BRUNTON and MELVILLE.]

THE KING [to BRUNTON].

Sir Brunton, state the grounds of your offence.
Conceal not any fact that led you on.
You seem a strong-willed man, of solid sense.
Why shot you down the Minister who's gone?

BRUNTON.

Impelled by injury which none may bear
Unmoved, the murder of my much-loved wife,
I killed him, Sire, unfit the name to wear
Of Honour, and who planned to take my life.
My nephew's, too, this gallant, dauntless youth;
I took the guilt upon me for his sake;
He was deputed to kill you, in truth,
By traitors, who their thirst for blood would slake.
Veroni I insulted, once, for threats
He insolently levelled at my pride;
Hence he entangled me in secret nets,
And finished by the slaying of my bride.

THE KING.

Your cause was just. And you, young man, relate
What was it made you anxiously affirm
The guilt was yours? Is crime in you innate?
Or are you tired of life's too lengthy term?

MELVILLE.

Existence owed to others, Sire, is theirs;
So great the debt is I to Brunton owe,
My death could ne'er repay it; his affairs
Are mine to right, and this shall e'er be so.

THE KING.

How wonderful is love! More strange in men,
When felt for brother sufferers. How grand!
Such generosity no words could pen.
Come, each of you! Accept my friendly hand.

[*They approach and take the KING's hand.*]

My pardon you have gained. Remain awhile.
Attend the orders that concern yourselves.
You both were victims of a plot most vile.

[*To the QUEEN.*]

My Queen, with fairy wand, control your elves.

[*The QUEEN rises and exit. Returns, leading LILIAN by the hand, with GIOCONDA and MEG, and lady attendants.*]

BRUNTON.

What! Lilian! Whom all thought dead and gone!
O! Heaven! I thank thee! This is joy divine!

MELVILLE.

O! happiest day that e'er for me has shone!
Gioconda, angel, this surprise is thine.

THE QUEEN.

Let me effect an introduction, Sirs.
This lady is the wife of yon stern knight ;
Proud of her husband, and the name she bears,
Long has she suffered imprisonment and fright.
The Lady Lilian Brunton is her name,
A gentle, lovable and worthy wife ;
Rescued, at length, and free from hurt or shame,
She wonders how she caused despair and strife.
This worthy woman [*indicating MEG*]
 tracked the miscreants all,
Discovered where they kept the lady close ;
For the Contessa here, with constant call,
Urged that the lost one lived ; gave no repose.
Thus, then, was she traced out, and here she is.
If you, Sir Brunton, wish her back again,
Explain to her your hoarded mysteries ;—
But why those tears?—I see you are in pain.

[*To LILIAN.*]

Descend to him, and comfort his distress ;
For this is woman's privilege on earth,
That she, the weaker one, when cares depress
Her mate, gains qualities of strength and worth.

[*To GIOCONDA.*]

And you, Contessa, go to him who waits
So lovingly, and eyes your form so dear.
I think, friends, kind to me as are the Fates,
I have not joyed so much for many a year.

[LILIAN, GIOCONDA, and MEG descend the steps of the throne together.]

[BRUNTON *comes towards* LILIAN, and MELVILLE
towards GIOCONDA.]

BRUNTON.

My Lillian, long ached my heart
That I perforce from you must part ;
And, since I drove you from my side,
Dire perils made our breach more wide.
But now, dear apple of my eye,
No more you need to weep and sigh.
The world before us, let us home ;
I vow no more again to roam.
Love, dry your tears, and meet with smiles
A new and riper courtship's wiles.
Our Spring of life was sweet and good ;
Our Autumn shall repeat the mood.

[*She nestles her head on his shoulder.*]

Act III.]

THE DESTROYERS.

[Scene 4.]

MEG (*aside*).

And I, poor Meg, derided, laughed at, scorned,
Who all these grand and mighty people warned,
Have I not some reward more kind than gold?
Not here on earth; my shell is worn and old.

GIOCONDA.

My Egbert, let us choose our country home
Where lilies float on lakes, and where the swan
Glides grandly; where the blue and fleckless dome
Of heaven smiles health on earth's bright paragon.

MELVILLE.

Gioconda, dearest treasure of my soul,
Your wish is my delight, of mine a part.
Now I have reached on earth my highest goal,
The winning of your noble, precious heart.

[*They embrace.*]

THE KING.

A wedding feast, my Queen, we must provide,
If these young doves will bill and coo all day.
We'll dance till we are tired; then kiss the bride,
And send them safe upon their joyous way.

[END OF SCENE 4 OF ACT III.]

[END OF ACT III.]

FINIS.



LAYS AND LYRICS.

Waikato's Message.

- " Waikato ! Noble stream of waters swiftly flowing—
" Deeply and darkly blue—whilst on thy course thou'rt going :
" What meanest thou ? What message dost thou carry
" From thy parent sources to the sea thy wavelets intermarry ?

" Art yet accustomed to the change that's wrought around thy
banks ?
" Dost know how high the race that owns thy pale-faced vot'ry
ranks ?
" Thou heedest not ; but rushing by—as thou hast rushed so long—
" Thy only answer comes to me ; an everlasting song.

" O ! would I were so privileged to know what Nature says,
" Soon would I have, proud river, then, the meaning of thy lays.
" Thy language is a mystery ; 'tis like the tongue of birds—
" I cannot bring myself to think its music has no words.

" Come ! rouse thyself ! Here they have placed a bridge
" Across thy steep, high banks from ridge to ridge.
" Wilt suffer this ? In all thy ages past
" Wast ever treated so ? And wilt succumb at last ?

" It is not many years since thou, in wrath,
" Didst sweep away the bridge placed in thy path :
" An innovation vile, which puny man
" Contrived, with futile art, thy breadth to span ;
" But now thou canst not reach to swallow down
" The wooden road that leads from town to town !"

Apostrophising thus the river old,
And by its inattention rendered bold,
Down its fern-covered banks my steps I bent,
And thoughtful o'er its strand I slowly went.

A lovely dell soon met my kindling gaze,
A spot where Nature's fancy sweetly plays ;
The fairy ferns festooned the rocks around,
'Mid which a waterfall plashed down with soft, symphonic sound.
Musing, I lay me down and fell asleep, and dreamed,
Despite the spray, though far away the mournful weka screamed.

LAYS AND LYRICS.

The Spirit of the River stood before me
In robes of silvery showers, superbly shining ;
It said—"Didst think to invoke a demon stormy,
"That thus thou didst address me while to answer thee
declining?

"In that thou wert not wise. But for thy quest
"After the secret held within my breast,
"Tis but the daring innate in thy race
"Who would invade the stars could they a highway trace.

"Tis true I have a meaning—far above
"Thy comprehension—based on endless love.
"I may not tell thee all, but, though thou'rt bold,
"What suits thy reason's limit shall unfold.

"Should I disclose the changes I have known,
"This country's history in ages flown,
"Thy life's poor span would be completely run,
"And still the tale would be but just begun.

"Once I presided here 'midst savage scenes ;
"A barbarous race held all these lands around.
"Now that brave dusky people thine demeans,
"And occupies their old, ancestral ground.

"Such is their fate, ordained from time of old ;
"Progress must sweep the world by War and Gold ;
"And that strange chain—which, Ocean tells me, binds
"This land to furthest lands—unite all human kinds.

"Driven, by your superior means and craft,
"Southwards, where yet your ways on theirs you'll graft,
"Where Kawhia's harbour beckons enterprise,
"The Maori kingdom droops, and all but dies.

"Kingdom, 'tis called, though in the times that were,
"A chief had far more power than that King there.
"Their fate need not be mourned by those like me—
"Still ever going onward to the Sea.

"But now all round my banks ye build
"Your homes, and work your farms,
"And townships spring—with people filled—
"Quite free from past alarms.
"Fear not ! Let peace reign e'er ! 'Tis Nature's will
"That you should conquer her, yet be her vassals still.

LAYS AND LYRICS.

" The Spirit of the Winds comes oft to me,
" Bringing me news from land and from the sea.
" Of late he told me how 'tis your intent
" Still to lead on our brother, Steampower, pent
" In ribs of iron, whilst o'er rails of steel
" His strength impels the swiftly-travelling wheel.

" Oft have I quarrelled with his rough endeavour
" To force his way against my stream, but never
" Will he be conquered ; all that I can do
" Is expedite his journey back for you.
" But when the Lightning Spirit comes of age,
" I hope to be relieved of Steam's rude rage.

" 'Tis well ! Yes, lead him on. For what care I !
" By land he will your endless wants supply ;
" And then my banks will smile with homesteads neat,
" And I'll be famed as rich with wool and wheat.

" Look ! Lift thine eyes across the plain, towards Mangakawa's
heights,
" And then to Pukekura's hills. There see the best of sights :
" The woolly flocks, o'er all the land, feed on the herbage green—
" This makes New Zealand, for her wealth, all Australasia's
Queen.

" Thou sayst 'tis not so now. Thou'rt right. But then what might
it be
" If lands were let to proper men, whose means would leave
them free.
" You must have moneyed men to make for labour great demand,
" And stations large, with holdings small, bestow with even hand.

" I'm told that bright Australia boasts of countless herds and
flocks,
" Though drought and dearth—the squatter's dread—mow down
both sheep and ox.
" O ! could her rich sons occupy our large waste tracts of land,
" Our climate mild and fertile ground must sure success command.

" That magic power called Capital, that works so many wonders,
" That pierces mountains, raises plains, and hemispheres sunders,
" Your century's wizard wand, which wondrous science wields,
" 'Tis that alone can open up Earth's wide, productive fields.

" Put not your trust in agriculture only,
" Prepare your lands for pastoral pursuits too ;
" Let not your farms look lifeless, lax, and lonely :
" Europe demands much food and clothes from you.

LAYS AND LYRICS.

"Are there not men with minds among you now,
"And means to carry out the glorious plan,
"To grow the golden fleece, to speed the plough?
"Why should not those bestir themselves who can?

"Come! I invite you. Enterprise will win.
"The end is sure success. Why not begin?
"How few are they who hitherto have dared
"To test my bounty, and no pains have spared?

"Shall Matamata carry off the palm
"Which should be mine, and I rest poor and calm?
"No! give me cattle, wheat, and wool, and grain.
"These I must have, and these I shall obtain.

"But what I now unfold to thee, let all thy species know,
"That those who should consider me their enterprise may show.
"It is to Auckland that I look to set the work on foot;
"And in Australia and the South much confidence I put.

"Some Britons and Americans may turn their eyes towards me,
"And Europeans of ev'ry race may come across the sea;
"But, bear in mind, what I want now are flocks, and herds, and
wheat,
"And not a crowd of townships small, which each with each
compete.

"My power is great, and may be used in many a goodly scheme;
"My arms may be extended, and the land with products teem;
"And railways, roads, and bridges will serve to bring me near
"To Auckland's port, a prosperous mart, with large supplies from
here.

"Enough! Too long I loiter; I must on!
"Remember what I've told thee. Up—begone!
"More I would say, but now I may not tarry.
"This is, in part, the message that I carry."

And so I woke. No spirit stood before me.
In robes of silvery showers, with words surprising,
Although such great effect had this strange vision o'er me,
That I have never since that ceased surmising.

I rose and looked around in great confusion,
And wondered whether it was all illusion.
Beside me plashed the waterfall in peaceful, pearly stream,
The fairy ferns waved gracefully amid the spray's bright gleam;
Their music mingled sweetly with the everlasting song
Of the river rushing rapidly in rippling rills along.

The Canary.

Dear golden-plumaged songster, sweetly trilling
Thy precious notes, with joy my pleased ear thrilling,
I love to listen whilst thy varied lay
Bursts brilliant from thy throat in vocal spray.

Sweet little poet, what dost thou recite,
With soft, melodious accent welling up
Like sparkling waters from a fountain bright,
Or diamond drops around Narcissus' cup?

Art pouring forth a pæan to liberty?
Would'st plead in song that I should set thee free?
Or dost thou thank me for my constant pains
To tend and feed thee well, in grateful strains?

Doth some fair dream thy life on earth enthrall?
Doth ardent love thy tiny heartstrings burn?
Or dost thy ancient Isle of Hounds* recall,
And, hopeful, celebrate a quick return?

Why should we prison thee, my pretty pet,
Within those bars that cage thee in from flight?
And why dost thou, so patient, never fret,
But greet with happy song the sun's warm light?

I saw the great, fierce eagle upward fly,
To face day's orb with bold and piercing eye;
I saw the stupid, moon-faced owl, by day,
Mope helplessly upon a ruin gray.

We cage not these to ornament our homes,
But then we love them not as we love thee;
And though each free through air or forest roams,
In thy imprisonment thou art as free.

The soul that lives in thee proclaims thee so;
It sends its cheerful feelings forth in strains
That speak its happiness, and sweetly flow
In jets of joyful, musical refrains.

Yet were thy native woods by thee beheld,
And wert thou not by hind'ring bars withheld,
Thou might'st then spread thy wings and gladly fly
To thy first home, where thou would'st wish to die.

*NOTE.—According to Pliny "Canaria Insula" was so called from the large dogs found there.

LAYS AND LYRICS.

Thou teachest me Contentment's useful plan,
To wisely feel what happiness we can ;
And, though constrained in limits here to live,
To sing in spirit, joys our life doth give.

Then, pretty bird, trill sweetly while thou canst,
For zephyrs die, where just before they danced ;
But should fell Death dash out thy life's calm light,
My home would mourn to lose thy presence bright.

Al Mia Kanario.

Kantisto kara dol'ce ektrilanta
'Carmantajn notojn hele elvibranta,
Mi amas a'udi melodion, svele
Venantan el la cia gor'go bele.

Kion ci rakontas poeteto do,
Kun dol'ca akcentado neeble tro ?
Kiel akvo brila el fontano, tiel
La diamantaj gutoj ver'sas el.

'Cu la'udas liberecon kore, min
Proparoladas liberigi cin ?
Min dankas por konstanta zorgo pri
Nutra'jon, 'cu pripensis do de mi ?

'Cu son'gas bele pri la vivo ? 'Cu
Fervora amo estas ravo tiu ?
A'u insuleton cian ci memoras,
E spere fruan iron nun proponas ?

Kial ni malliberigus cin, O ! ve,
En baroj, ke foriros 'ciam ne ?
O ! kial pacience 'gojas ci,
Kaj eksalutis lumon tie 'ci ?

Mi vidis grandan aglon supre for,
Kun akran vidon apud suna or'
Malspritan gufon sur ruino, dum
Malhelpe sidis en la taga lum'

Ne ka'gas ni tiujn 'ci neniam,
Sed ilin ni ne amas, kaj cin 'ciam,
Kaj kvankam ili vagas ja libere,
Ci en enfermo vivas do konvene.

NOTE.—a, e, i, o, u = ah, eh, ee, oh, oo. c, 'c, 'g, 'h, 'j, 's = ts, ch, j, kh, zh, sh.
j = y.

LAYS AND LYRICS.

Animo kiun ci havas diras tion,
Pepanta gaje ni ne scias kion,
Sed kiu montras 'gojon cian plezure,
Kun 'ciam musikajn sonojn e'c arie.

Kaj tamen se ci vidis nun la hejmon
De cia naski'go mem, kaj la arbaron,
Se tiuj baroj ne malhelpus cin,
Flugilojn do stre'canta lasus min.

Instruas min la kontentecon ci,
La senton sa'gan dum ni tie 'ci
En limoj restas kanti 'ciam kura'ge
Feli'con kiun ni povas iel rezone.

Nun, bela birdo, trilu dum ci vivus ;
Zefiroj mortas kie dancis ja 'jus ;
Se cian lumon Morto do detruos,
Ni 'ciuj nian perdon tre plorekos.

Inauguration Ode.

1.

Azure-girt Isles of the Southern Seas,
In charming garb arrayed,
Fresh in the touch of the healthful breeze ;
Free, yet by Britain swayed :

Welcome the guests from afar and near,
Led by your fair renown !
Hail all your scions flocking here
From country and from town !

Where the brave Maori roamed of old
O'er all this wide-stretched land,
Here we have framed, and now behold,
This Exposition grand.

A token of Advance and Hope,
Of pure and lofty aim ;
A sign of e'er extending scope
And distant reaching fame.

2.

Canoes first woke this shore from sleep ;
What miracles are wrought !
Huge iron monsters of the deep
Have now its inlets sought.

LAYS AND LYRICS.

And now from furthest Lands we see
Rich argosies arrive ;
Brisk Commerce covers ev'ry quay ;
Industrial projects thrive.
Where anthropophagy prevailed
The laws of Peace now rule ;
Where tribes each other fierce assailed
Their children crowd to school.
Here come the Arts, a happy band,
Which skilful Science sways ;
And peaceful trades join hand in hand
To celebrate their praise.
Then may we thank our Maker oft,
Who gave us guiding light ;
And let us cheer the Flag aloft
That leads the van of Right.

3.

Long is the struggle of humankind,
Striving to reach the Good ;
Long have we sought for a link to bind
Nations in brotherhood.
Yet we have won the great Ocean Chain
Threading the World with words ;
Man dares to fly, o'er the earth to reign,
Heavenward, as the birds.
Freedom of heart and of mind we seek,
Guided by Virtue's light ;
In these fair Isles, on each vale and peak,
Liberty nestles bright.
Harbinger of a great future time
When all the World will find
Unity, Peace, and a Faith sublime
In all its works combined.

4.

Come ! Look around, and view the charms
That rise on ev'ry side ;
The Sea brings Progress in its arms,
With ev'ry newborn tide.
The Mountains watch the busy scene
That girds their sides around ;
The Rivers run, with course serene,
On helpful errand bound.
Rejoice, O ! Land, at thy good fate
That grants thee blessings e'er ;
Be glad, O ! Sea, that such a State
Bedecks thy waters fair.

LAYS AND LYRICS.

Within these lofty walls we view
Rich wares from ev'ry Mart,
The marvels Nature's hand can do,
And Skill, with varied Art.
The Nations send us friendly guests
And many treasures rare,
A worthy trust, at their behests
Confided to our care.

5.

Sweet Music shall enchant you here
With all its moods and tones,
And fountains with their waters clear
That gleam like precious stones.
Bright flowers shall please your eyes with hues
Of all the rainbow's rays ;
'Mid graceful fern fronds you shall muse,
As in deep woody maze.
These Southern Scenes of Alp and Lake,
Of Forest, Spring and Sound,
Shall e'er within your mem'ry wake
A pleasure-thought profound.
O ! praise our God for ev'ry gift
On our Blest Country showered ;
May He our thoughts to Him uplift,
With happiness embowered.

What Pure Jewels.

What pure jewels are so precious
As thine eyes of sparkling blue?
What soft silk in texture rivals
Thy bright hair of golden hue?
Yet I prize not so thy beauty
As thy being good and true.
What fair form can be beholden
Than which thou art not more fair?
Is there sweetness in creation
With thy nature to compare?
This I prize beyond thy beauty,
Thy mild kindness, gift so rare.
Is there music more delightful
Than the accents of thy voice?
Are there thoughts so bright and pleasing
As thy sentiments are choice?
Yet not merely in their beauty,
But their pureness, I rejoice.

The Ruined Terraces.

So grand, so beautiful, and yet so frail ;
Why were they formed to last so short a day ?
Convulsive throes of Nature made them quail
And like a fairy vision pass away.

The Mountain belched great cataracts of fire
Around the Lake, where they abode so still,
And avalanches, hurling rocks and mire,
Crushed out their symmetry, with purposed ill.

They were Zealandia's pride, and gave her fame ;
Admirers came from many a distant clime ;
But like all earthly scenes, a transient name
Was theirs, and their renown must yield to time.

Where fierce Vesuvius, with fiery rage,
Assailed those Roman cities, known to fame,
Some beauties loved by Art, and dear to Sage,
Escaped the ruthless fury of his flame.

Grim Tarawera left no sign to tell
The glory he destroyed, but made all waste ;
For where the fragile, fairy structures fell
No fragment will be found, no form be traced.

How lovely were their healthful azure baths,
Rimmed and embroidered with ethereal pearl !
Strange mystery environs Nature's paths,
Evolving charms from awful fiery whirl.

The Element they sprang from sealed their fate,
Undoing where it had superbly done ;
Thus Earth consumes her treasures small and great,
They fain must perish when their course is run.

Since so the Universe unbuilds and forms
Its changeful work, the spangled heavens blue,
What marvel then, when Zephyrs yield to Storms,
Man's proudest works are doomed to ruin, too.

We mourn the splendours lost to our short sight,
Gone where we go when life has spent its fire.
Hope is the glimmer of a future light
Surpassing all we know or can desire.

LAYS AND LYRICS.

No permanence is in this world's delights,
They come, they pass, like fleeting, flying dreams.
Our Daytime brightness; shadows dark our Nights,
Joy brings us laughter, Sorrow tearful streams.

Throughout the Globe, both far and near, was spread
The saddening message of Eruption dire;
The ruined Fanes were mourned like Heroes dead,
All Nations honoured thus their Funeral Pyre.

Yet shall Zealandia cease to weep for these,
For comfort shall be sent to make her glad;
The charms of youth she wears remain to please,
Her loveliness is such as e'er she had.

She will be courted for her balmy air,
Her Sounds, her Alps, Springs, Lakes, Streams, Forests,
Ports;
Not for her Gold alone; she has her share;
But grander treasures, of the worthier sorts.

Her Future is before her, full of good;
The victories of Peace will crown her brow.
Adversities she bravely has withstood,
And now must on, for Fortune favours now.

La Terasoj Ruinataj.

Tia bela, tia brila, sed malforta!
O! kial al ili estis falo sorta?
La konvulsiaj batoj de la Monto
Detruis ilin mire kiel rakonto.

La fajraj kataraktoj eksplodigis
La Lagon, kie ili 'gin beligis.
Lavangoj al'jetantaj 'stonojn, 'slimon,
Premegis simetrian tiun limon.

Maorujo 'satis multe lian belecon;
El 'ciuĵ landoj estis admirecon
Por ilin, sed la famo 'ciam pasas,
La nomon lian la Tempo ja for'casas.

Sova'ga Vesuvio fajre brulis
Antikvajn urbojn, kie la lafo rulis,
Artistaj sed trezoroj tre amataj
Forkuris post renversoj tiam elspataj.



LAYS AND LYRICS.

La kruelega Tarawera lasis
Nenian memorigon de la gloro,
'Car kie feina fantazeco falis
Fragmento estas ne, nek formo staris.

Belegaj banoj estis sanaj tie,
Lazuraj kun la perlaĵ randoj 'cie,
Eteraj, sed la 'carmojn misterege
Naturo faris fajre kaj timege.

La Elemento mem, ke ilin kreis
Belege, 'cion terure do detruis,
'Car tiel la Tero belojn 'ciam konsumas,
Pereemajn dum admire ili lumas.

Nin ne surprizas do ke homaj verkoj
Perei devas, kiam Universo
'San'gemaj en la bluaj 'cieloj formas,
Kaj e'c detruas kion ili zorgas.

Plore gas ni belegojn nun perditajn,
Al loko kie ni iros jam prenitajn :
Espero kura'gigas kun estonto
Kiu tre superos 'cion la'u rakonto.

Nenio daŭra estas en la tero,
Flugante son'go pasas kuriero,
Kaj tago hela, nokto ombra, vivo,
Ridanta 'gojo, larma do motivo.

Tra 'ciaj landoj disvasti'gis novoj
De la elsputo kaj bedaŭraj trovoj,
Kaj la Terasoj estis ploregataj,
Memore estas 'cie honorataj.

Sed nia lando 'cesos ilin plori ;
Konsolo venos, oni 'ciam glori
Belecon 'gian superemos fame,
Vida'jojn 'giajn oni la'udos ame.

Balzama 'cielo, fjordoj 'carmaj, Alpoj,
Fontanoj varmaj, riveretoj, lagoj ;
Arbaroj kaj havenoj indaj vere
Elvokas la admiron ja sincere.

La estonteco alkondukas bonon ;
La verkoj de la paco donos kronon ;
Kontraŭbatalis malfacilojn brave,
Bon'sanco nun favoras, do anta'ue.

LAYS AND LYRICS.

Victoria Regina.

A noble Presence, firm and brave,
Received the Crown Her England gave,
While cheers of Britons rang around,—
Her regal eyes filled at the sound.

'Twas '37.

Her honoured Albert won Her hand ;
A Prince was born, to bless our Land.
Peace still preserved its healthful sway ;
Mild Mendelssohn then passed away.

'Twas '47.

Great Albert cherished peaceful Art ;
Made commerce world-wide find her Mart.
Fierce Muscovite ambition quailed.
Mad Sepoy hate and murder failed.

'Twas '57.

A widowed Queen, all shared Her grief ;
Her happiness was all too brief.
Italian liberty was gained,
And Abyssinian prowess waned.

'Twas '67.

Bold Prussian tactics humbled France ;
Revenge from Time will seize its chance ;
Then Anarchy in Spain was quelled,
While England her great hand withheld.

'Twas '77.

Disraeli's voice ruled at Berlin.
Afghanistan was freed from din.
Egyptian troubles ended well ;
Then Jubilee hymns 'gan to swell.

'Twas '87.

Great Salisbury dictated Peace ;
Red War, the nonce, perforce must cease.
The Diamond Jubilee is here ;
Hail ! Queen and Empress ever dear.

'Tis '97.

Disarmament.

The Czar put on his cap and bells
To eat the oyster, but the shells
He offered to the nations round,
And said, "O! Powers, a cure I've found
"To pay our bills and heal our sins.
"'Tis this,—let's all in peace shake fins.
"(And then, perhaps, we'll see who wins.)"

Yet Kronstadt stood so stern and grim,
And Vladivostock was in trim,
While railways, running o'er the ice,
Sped men and arms, a warlike vice.
(A sign of peace at any price.)

Then Muravieff, so sleek and sly,
Quite calmly winked the other eye,
And took French leave, the Kaiser's cue,
While still John Bull's horns pushed and grew.
(For he must always have his due.)

A *piece* of China's Russia's aim;
As Juliet says, "What's in a name?"
If that piece comes without a fight,
The Czar obtains what is his right.
(Turks, too, will get their own delight.)

A navy is an ugly blot.
An army (Saxon, Kelt, and Scot),
When they belong to such a race
As one can hardly like to face.
(And if they are disarmed, there's space.)

Throw down your guns; give mujiks room
To occupy, to stretch, to bloom,
To come beyond the band of ice,
And boss the show, as in a trice.
(For this is peace at Moskvian price.)

Government Offices,
Wellington,
November 20, 1877.

Dear Sir,

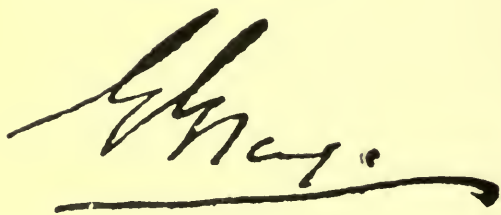
I have received your letter in which you ask the favour of introductions to gentlemen in Sydney; and you add—"I have ventured to ask this favour of you, on account of your acquaintance with my family from the early days of this Colony, and of your ever-expressed readiness to help forward the rising youth of the Colony in every reasonable way."

In reply, I have pleasure in saying that for many years I have known, and had a high esteem for, your family. I have also known yourself from childhood, and believe you are deserving of a success in life which I shall be glad to see you attain.

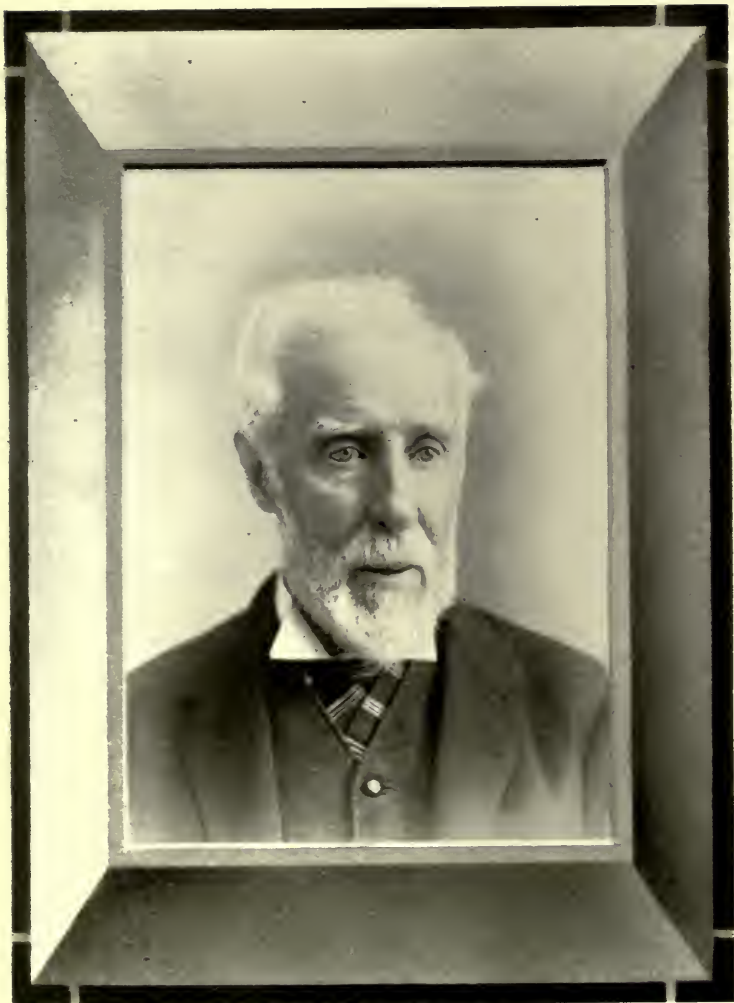
You are perfectly at liberty to make any use of this letter you please.

I am,

Faithfully yours,

A large, stylized handwritten signature in dark ink, likely reading 'M. R. Keesing', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

MAURICE R. KEESING, ESQ.



SIR GEORGE GREY.

LAYS AND LYRICS.

Sir George Grey, K.C.B.

IN MEMORIAM.

Aged in the childhood of Southern realms,
Though Death sets his seal on the hero sage,
And the flight of the years his life o'erwhelms,
Men grave his renown on hist'ry's page.
In his youth and strength he trod new tracks
Through the forests and marshes of Austral clime,
O'er a desert wild, amid savage blacks,
Where settlers' homes mark the newer time.
On Afric's shore, where Boers held sway,
States treasure his name in a worthy shrine;
In Maoriland, where he paved the way
To greatness, ever his name will shine.
He was old in wisdom, and full of years,
And his mind was worn with its endless toil;
His tribute grand was an Empire's tears,
When he breathed his last on England's soil.
'Neath the sacred Dome where heroes lie,
In the calm repose of the peaceful tomb,
His remains were laid, with a mournful sigh,
Yet he would not have wished a happier doom.
Where the sins of men, by the Father's love,
Through their virtues sink to oblivion,
His spirit will find its Heav'n above,
For his task on Earth was nobly done.

To My Old Friend, Peter Schlemihl.

(AFTER CHAMISSO.)

Again I have your letter in my hand ;
Once more, dear friend, I take my mental stand
Where we as boys together played and read
In schooldays, times and feelings long since fled.
And now I am so old, so worn, so tired,
No more with youthful ardour quickly fired,
Our quarrels seem a trifle, and I haste
To make amends for friendship gone to waste.
My sympathy, my sympathy for you
Is now revived, and I with sorrow view
How Evil Power deprived you of your shade,
But I am such as Nature always made.
Perchance foul Satan boasts to you of this ;
Yet surely you will not take that amiss ;
The shadow I possessed when Life began
Remained to me, and will remain a span.
I suffered punishment for your misdeeds ;
We were as much alike as two green reeds ;
And I was falsely nicknamed by the crowd
The Shadowless Schlemihl, with gibings loud.
My arguments were still of no avail,
Though I displayed my shadow ; they would rail
Until my patience was unduly tried,
And I was wounded in my inward pride.
“ But what is, then, a shadow ? ” some would ask,
To take a mortal’s prejudice to task ;
“ Why value it so greatly, as if all
Depended on that image large or small ? ”
From Time’s first gleam it was, and still exists,
While e’er increasing Wisdom clears all mists.
We gaze on phantoms here with shadows cast,
Then present phantoms weirdly form the past.
So give thy hand to me, Schlemihl, my friend,
We’ll e’en defy old Satan to the end.
The sinful World may blame us, as it will,
But safely we shall hold together still.
Be not in doubt ; we shall attain the goal,
Though cunning Satan try to snatch our soul.
All grief o’ercome, our final place of rest
Shall be beyond the worst, among the best.

Ni e'c procedos kontra'ustar' Satanon.

Revenas en la mano via letero
Post multaj jaroj kaj, mirind' afero,
Mi pensas kiel ni faris amikadojn
Nin trovis en lernejo kamaradojn.
Mi estas maljunulo, griza, laca ;
Pasinta nun la honto tute falsa ;
Tiel frue min amikon vian vokas ;
Mi anta'u la homaro vin rekonas.
Ho ! mia kompatinto, kompatinto,
Mian vivon tiel vian, kiel mirindo,
La Ruzo ne malbone difektigis ;
Penadis mi, e'c kvankam ne gajnis.
Diablo nun plendka'uze fanfaronos
Al vi ke mian ombron 'ciam donos ;
Jes, mian ombron havis mi kiam knabo,
Kaj ombro estos mia dumviva havo.
Suferis punojn mi pro viaj faroj ;
Sen kulpo mia, kaj la malsa'garoj
Trompi'ge nomis min Schlemihl sen ombro,
'Car mi similis vin, krom ombra nombro.
Sed kiam mi montris tre konvinke 'gin
Do ili malhoneste mokis min.
Ho ve ! necesa estas pacienco ;
Senkulpa 'gojo estas sa'ga penso.
" El kiu do konsistas tiu ombro,"
Demandis oni, kvaza'u pri la trombo,
" Por 'sati 'gin treege rekt' a'u ronda,
Por savi 'gin malgra'u malico monda ? "
'Gi jam ekzistis mil kaj mil post a'goj,
Kun grade kreska sa'go 'ciu'j tagoj ;
Fantomojn 'ci kun ombroj ni rigardas ;
Fantomoj ili tiam mistere pasas.
Ho donu do, Schlemihl, al mi la manon ;
Ni e'c procedos kontra'ustar' Satanon ;
Ni ne 'cagrenos nin pri peka mondo,
Sed sendan'gere kune estos fondo.
La celon ni atingos ja sendube ;
Do ridu la Diablon, moku ruze.
Doloroj trapasitaj, en haveno
Ni pace nin repozas preter peno.

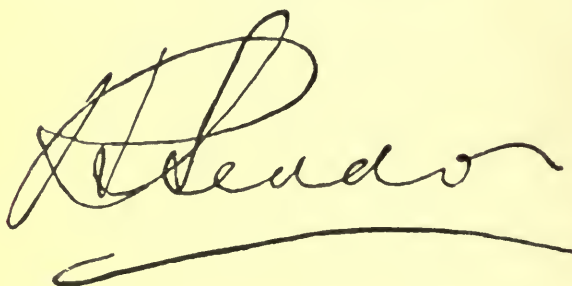
*Prime Minister's Office,
11th July, 1903.*

Dear Sir,

I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 26th ultimo, enclosing a copy of your lines entitled "A Champion of Liberty," for which please accept my thanks. I have read them with much interest and appreciation.

I am,

Yours faithfully,

A large, elegant handwritten signature in dark ink, which appears to be 'A. Balfour'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'A' and a long, sweeping horizontal line underneath.



HONOURABLE RICHARD JOHN SEDDON.

A Champion of Liberty.

How is a Land made great ?
Is it by Wars or Crimes,
Seeming the deeds of Fate,
That Nations count their Times ?

Not thus ; not paths of blood
Must lead to power and fame,
But ways of Peace and Good,
And actions free from blame.

Read Roman records, rife
With foul and fearful facts ;
Think out a Nero's life ;
Reflect on madmen's acts.

Turn then to France, and find
The terrors of a mob ;
A fury, fierce and blind
To murder and to rob.

Search England's calmer growth,
And trace the thoughtful turn
From deeds that we must loathe,
And now with shame would spurn.

The people's sense rebelled
From tyrants' hated chains,
And ever onward held
To nobler, higher gains.

But let no nation scorn
A newer, younger race,
In Southern Islands born,
That claims progressive place.

Its liberties, imbibed,
From British sources flow ;
Its Parliament inscribed
Free laws that wider grow.

What part that Ocean played
That laves fair Europe's coast,
A newer Ocean, made
By Commerce, tends to boast.

A fairer Land here blooms,
With budding hopes and smiles,
A kindlier face assumes,
And reigns a Queen of Isles.

Here strong and hale presides
A man of healthy will,
Whose aim all good betides,
Whose zeal advances still.

LAYS AND LYRICS.

With him to guide the helm
Ten prosperous years have past,
And bound with England's realm
His fame full long will last.

Through him our Mother greets,
With feelings fond and proud,
Her Scion, whose heart beats
With loyal throbblings loud.

An Epitaph.

His soul hath left this weary, thankless Earth
For worthier Spheres and purer Realms of life,
Well fitted for its new and brighter birth,
Though tired and worn with toil, and care, and strife,
Thankful to reach those regions where the Mind
Attains the Good untrammelled, unconfined.
He was beloved by many, and his end
Grieved those he left to mourn the painful blow,
And cast a gloom on each bereaved friend,
For they no more can meet him here below.
But though he is so missed from his late home,
When souls meet souls their purest joy shall come.

To a Friend.

Though thou art far from me to-night,
I dream I see thy face beam bright
That thus canst joy to me impart,
And that sweet thought doth cheer my heart.
For in the toils and cares of life,
In struggles vain and wearying strife,
The mem'ry, dear, of those we love
Alone can raise us these above.
So when thy kindness I recall
It lifts my soul above them all,
And lightens trouble's heavy load
That can to desperation goad.
O ! could but words express for me
The gratitude I feel to thee ;
O ! could my feelings take a shape
Angelic, and to thee escape,
To bless thy life, and cheer thy way,
And keep all sorrow far at bay ;
To make thy years one lasting joy
Without an end, with no alloy !

LAYS AND LYRICS.

Caprice.

When you seem so sad and low,
Pity fills my eyes with woe ;
Then I, childlike, long to know
What saddens you.

When you smile with sweet content,
All my heart with joy is rent ;
Then I ask, with kind intent,
What gladdens you ?

But when coldness mars your eyes,
When your love, all icebound, dies,
Then I muse in dumb surprise :
What freezes you ?

Changeful is the lover's heart,
Full of joy, or full of smart ;
Pain and pleasure are its part ;
That pleases you !

Grillen.

Wenn ich Sie so traurig find'
Thränen machen mich gelind ;
Dann ich frage, wie ein Kind,
Was wollen Sie ?

Wenn Sie lächeln doch vergnügt,
Ich bin, wie ein Thor, verrückt ;
Dann ich sage, so beglückt,
Was ahnen Sie ?

Ach ! Sie sehen aus so kalt,
Wie das Eis ; wie Holz gemalt ;
Dann ich fühle mich so alt ;
Was werden Sie ?

'S ist veränderlich das Herz,
Ein Geschöpf aus Gram und Scherz ;
Ja ! es lebt durch Heil und Schmerz ;
Das glauben Sie ?

One and One make One.

You! 'Tis not a lengthy word,
Yet has a charm beyond all speech ;
'Tis sweet to me, or seen or heard ;
Its power through all my life will reach.

I ! This is a shorter word ;
It gives me endless trouble still ;
It has a mania, quite absurd,
To lead me wrong against my will.

If you and I together were,
I know that all would better be ;
For you my evils fain would share ;
Without you life were nought for me.

Eins und Eins, nur Eins.

Du !—Das Wort ist kurz und klein,
Sagt aber immer mir so viel ;
Es scheint mir Etwas süß und rein,
Es gibt mir Leben, Mut, und Ziel.

Ich !—Dies ist ein läng'res Wort ;
Dies hab'ich Mühe zu verstehn ;
Es hindert mich gewaltig dort,
Wohin ich wünsche gern zu gehn.

Zusammen wären Du und Ich,
So würde Alles besser sein ;
Denn du verstehst immer mich,
Und ich wär' nichts, wenn nimmer dein.

LAYS AND LYRICS.

Casa di S.A.R.

Il Duca degli Abruzzi.

Italian Cruiser "Liguria,"

July 25th, 1890,

Auckland.

Dear Mr. M. R. Keesing,

*His Royal Highness the Duke of Abruzzi directs me to
present you His best thanks for the Italian poem you had the
kindness to send Him.*

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Yours truly,

LIEUT. G. DUCEI,

H.R.H.'s Aide-de-camp.

La Lingua Toscana.

Lingua si bella,
Dolce favella,
Piena d'amore
Pien' di colore
Come un fiore.

Ogni donzella
Che parla quella
Sembra più cara,
Casta e chiara
Come un' ara.

Madre antica
Roma, amica
Della giustizia,
D'ogni notizia
Di amicizia.

Figlia servata,
La buona fata,
Coi alti Lari;
Le furon cari
Genii rari.

Nuova aurora
Sorge ancora;
Viene la gloria;
Cresce la storia
Della vittoria.

LAYS AND LYRICS.

The Tuscan Tongue.

Delightful language, idiom so sweet,
Music's own tongue, with melody replete ;

Each charming maid this honeyed speech that owns
Is dearer, purer, through those silvery tones.

That ancient mother, Rome, a friend of Right,
Gave Europe gifts, the heirlooms of her might.

Her daughter Italy, reserved for fame,
Conferred high Arts, and many a brilliant Name.

Again a dawn of Glory tints her air ;
The Victory of Peace is rising there.

Rossia and Nihon.

On Asia's eastern shore one day
The Russian shouted "*Zdravstvuite !*"
And through the Orient summer's glow
Came faintly floating "*O hayo !*"

"*Kak pashivayete, Japan ?*
"Are you prepared to fight a man ?"
A calm, clear challenge came from far,
"*Ikaga de gozaimasu ka ?*"

Then gripping, struggled dwarf and raider,
The Russian wished to cry "*Pobieda*";
He found it was another story,
For ev'ry round the Jap called "*Shori.*"

What can the Russian, high and mighty,
Perform before he yells "*Proshchaite*" ?
The little Jap wears Fame's tiara ;
Will triumph mark his "*Sayonara*" ?

A problem waits for Fortune's freak ;
Will Asia call her tongue "*yazeek*" ?
Or will she oust her ancient foe,
And further make her language "*go*" ?

NOTE.—The Russian and Japanese words in the 1st verse express "Good Morning"; in the 2nd, "How do you do?" in the 3rd, "Victory"; in the 4th, "Good-bye"; in the 5th, "Language."

Miniatures.

Stolidity.

There was a fine man of Argentum,
Who was quite devoid of momentum ;
When asked wherefore born,
He looked rather worn ;
And yet he remains in Argentum.

Vi era un uomo d'Argento,
Che non fece mai movimento ;
Gli fu dimandato,
" Perchè siete nato ? "
E pure si tiene Argento.

Otium cum Dignitate.

There was an old hermit of Rome,
Who made of a bottle his home ;
" Who can be like me ? "
With hauteur said he ;
" Who has such a beautiful home ? "

Habia un hombre de Roma
Recluso en una redoma ;
" ¿ Quién como yo ? "
Así replicó,
" Yo tengo aquí la redoma."

Temerity.

There was a young spark at Ungava,
Who always was playing with lava ;
One day he blew up
With his only pet pup,
And the parents abandoned Ungava.

Il était un niais à Ungave,
Qui toujours s'amusait de la lave ;
Il sauta aussitôt,
Son jeune chien au dos ;
Les parents échappèrent d'Ungave.

LAYS AND LYRICS.

Denationalisation.

An overwise witch lived in Posen, ·
Making grasshoppers roses all chosen ;
But they all jumped away,
And burst in the clay ;
Hence came all the uproar in Posen.

Es war eine Hexe zu Posen,
Die machte aus Heuschrecken Rosen ;
Wann sie hüpfen vorbei,
Sie brachen entzwei ;
Davon kam der Aufruhr in Posen.

Sloth.

A lazy old scoundrel at Taupo
Possessed endless vistas of raupo ;
Yet all day he slept,
While there the stuff kept,
So lazy was that lout of Taupo.

Te tangata imua ki Taupo,
Ki a ia kanui te raupo ;
Katoa nga ra
Ka moe ia. Na !
Te tangata kino ki Taupo.

A Beautiful Girl.

Embodiment of Nature's matchless Thought,
Sent hither for an Earth-life's humbling phase,
A dream of higher handiwork She taught,
In shadowing forth thy beauty to our gaze.
O ! Love of perfect form and purity,
Whence came thy ray divine to bless us here ?
Are not unworthy base humanity
To know thy truth-born light, and hold thee dear ?
Not so. There lives within the dust-doomed flesh
A principle of sympathy—of love,
That lifts the calm, clear brow, pure, noble, fresh,
To ponder on a life, this life above.
O ! Planets, shining with those soft, bright beams
Reflected from your Sun's so ardent rays,
Withhold not from us aught that makes our dreams
Seek knowledge from your everlasting ways.

LAYS AND LYRICS.

But is there power to blight thee, beauteous flower,
Can thy sweet soul be crushed and killed with pain,
And is thy loveliness a harmful dower,
And are there murd'ers worse for thee than Cain ?
Protect thyself, thou innocent and pure,
With all the strength that chastity avails ;
Let not the tainted breath would thee allure,
Persuade thee to the fall of her that fails.
May thy own weakness be thy surest strength,
With nobleness of mind and virtue armed ;
Proceed not e'er beyond a modest length ;
Thou wilt be charmer, but must ne'er be charmed.
O ! Angels, if there are to shield us here,
Will you not flock around to guard her soul ?
Who more than you should hold her welfare dear ?
To join your band may be her destined goal.
Were I an Angel, and had I the power
To save such beauty from a moment's pain,
I'd tend her presence through Life's ev'ry hour,
And watch her death, th'escaping soul to gain.
Her eyes so brilliant with pure violet light,
No teardrop should be there for any wrong ;
Her mouth so tender, rose-red, pearl-rimmed, bright,
The proper avenue of mirth and song ;
Her nose so delicate ; her cheeks so clear ;
Her brow illumined, and her hair like gold ;
O ! Nature, wherefore didst thou bring so near
The days when she must change, becoming old ?
Ah ! Sweet one, may thy destiny be kind,
To give thee purest happiness on Earth ;
Thy days no tinge of bitter anguish find ;
Thy death be peaceful ; happier than thy birth.
The gentle voice that dwells upon thy lips
Asks mercy from each rougher creature's will ;
The modesty that guides thy dainty steps
Pleads for thy safety, and protects thee still.
Cast it not off ; let it not leave thee e'er ;
'Tis woman's precious privilege to have ;
And it will grace thee more its robes to wear
Than all thy beauty's power to make men rave.
Let all the kindness beaming from thy eyes
Seek worthy objects to inspire thy love ;
Let all the tenderness in thy soft voice
Tremble with pity for Earth's scenes that move.
Angel thou look'st, angelic is thy soul,
And O ! the shame that such as thou should fall
As they have fall'n. May that not be thy goal !
Be this, my special prayer, a guarding wall.

LAYS AND LYRICS.

The Weka Pass.

(An interpretation of a hieroglyphic.)

A weakened remnant held the Pass ;
Their race had been repulsed and slain.
The serpent foe crept through the grass
Below them on the fruitful plain.
Dire devastation far and wide
They saw around them from their height ;
Out seaward as they peered, and sighed,
Canoes of warriors came to fight.
The eaters fierce of captive men
Had swept the land of countless braves ;
For safety cowards fled their den,
And women were the victors' slaves.
The little band, devoid of hope,
Retained their fastness to the last ;
Provisions few, how could they cope
With tireless hosts increasing fast !
So, sadly pointing toward the sea,
They showed the fate that doomed them all,
And, rather prone to fight than flee,
Inscribed this on their prison wall.
Bold spirits of forgotten type !
When their aggressors fade away,
New conquerors, in an age more ripe,
Read the last records of their day.

Forward!

March forward ! March forward ! Delay not your striving,
The moment of victory now is arriving.
Fly boldly the standard through all the world's regions ;
All round the Earth's compass assemble your legions.

O ! peoples, attend, for we give you a treasure,
Exalting your aims by a pure, spotless pleasure,
Fulfilling the longing of great ancient sages,
For light and advancement, creating new ages.

Chorus.

Have courage ! Have courage ! Ye brave-hearted brothers,
Extend the boon further to benefit others.
Sing gladly in chorons a soul-stirring canto,
To spread far the praises of sweet Esperanto.

Klopodu !

(KANTO ESPERANTISTA.)

Anta'uen ! Anta'uen ! Ne restu momenton !
Konigu magian kaj povan la senton ;
Flugigu standardon tra tuta la mondo,
De amba'n polusoj 'gis 'cirka'u la rondo !

Popoloj, ho, a'udu ! Jen estas stimulo
Por celoj plej altaj sen ia makulo.
Antikva deziro atingos plenumon,
Triumfe venkante disvastigos lumon.

'Horo.

Kura'gu ! Kura'gu ! Vi, karaj amikoj,
Klopodu, ke kronu la da'uraj efikoj
Fervoran laboron ! Kun korega kanto
Anta'nen ni iru nun por Esperanto.

Love and Music: A Duo.

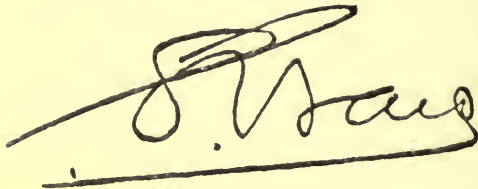
The science of Music is all very well
For those who can hammer, scrape, blow, roar, or yell ;
But give me a choice unfettered and free,
The science of Love is the science for me.
But Music hath charms for the heathen Chinee,
When it comes from the kettle containing his tea,
And Love is the cause of quarrels and wars,
Of breaches of promise and breaches of laws.
The science of Love is learned very soon
By those who can cuddle, hug, glance, kiss, and spoon,
But Music has so many bars, as a block,
And so many keys that 'tis hard to unlock.
Yet Love is the ruin of good appetite ;
You can't eat by day, and you can't sleep by night ;
E'en Esquimaux feel it acutely, they say ;
They can't eat their blubber, so blubber all day.
In rage and storm fortissimo,
In peace and calm pianissimo,
You'll find in Music this is so,
And thus in Love the rule doth go.
Forte, presto, off you go.
Piano, dolce, dear me, oh !
Adagio, all is lost I fear.
Allegro, come and kiss me, dear.

*Prime Minister's Office,
Wellington, July 19th, 1907.*

Dear Sir,

I duly received your letter of the 8th July, and have to thank you for the enclosed poem on the Dominion of New Zealand. The sentiments expressed exactly coincide with my own, and I had much pleasure in reading your lines to the House in the course of my speech on the subject.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'M. R. Keesing', with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the signature.

MAURICE R. KEESING, ESQ.



SIR JOSEPH WARD.

The New Dominion.

Where the spacious blue Pacific
Feels brisk freshness from the Pole,
Where bright Nature, so prolific,
Seems to breathe with freer soul,
There the isles of newer Britain
Brave the main with budding hope,
While their story, yet unwritten,
Grows with fast augmenting scope.
Once Australia stretched her aegis
Far across the sundering waves,
Claimed these shores as rightful lieges,
Thought to rule o'er Maori braves.
Other aims and new decisions
Gave them independent life ;
Yet their youth saw no fair visions
Through the battling mists of strife.
Newer times bring bold advancement,
Brighter minds give larger views ;
Clearer prospects gain enhancement
For the strength of growing clues.
Here a healthful young Dominion,
Through our guardian's fostering care,
Favoured by the World's opinion,
Wins applause from everywhere.
There are strong young limbs for striving ;
There are hearts that love the Right ;
And the Future, e'er arriving,
Glistens with the prospect bright.
These fair isles that face their ocean,
With a bold and noble view,
Shall uphold the sure promotion
Of the Upright and the True.
May the New Dominion flourish
With the progress Time will bring,
And a knot of heroes nourish
For the Empire and the King !

LAYS AND LYRICS.

La Nova Dominio.

Kie la bluan Pacifikon
La Poluso malvarmigas,
Kaj Naturo fruktoporta
Pli libere 'sajne spiras,
Tie insuloj novabritaj
Kontra'ustaras oceanon,
Dum ilia historio
Plivastigas grande kreskon.
A'ustralia jam regetis
Malproksime la marbordon
Kie la Maorioj bravaj
Amis vigle la senordon.
Novaj celoj de Anglujo
Kolonion tie faris ;
Tamen la juneca lando
Militade tiam batalis.
Nune Tempo plibonigas
La vida'jon, 'car spiritoj
Pli inteligentaj vidas
Kiel kreskas la progresoj.
Novan Dominion nune
La gardanto sa'ge fondis,
Signon de anta'neniro
Kiun la Mondo kore la'udis.
Fortaj penas tie junuloj
Bonaj koroj Rajton amas ;
Estonteco renoviga
Kun feli'co plie brilas.
Tie 'ci insuloj belaj
Per maltima nobla celo,
Per intenco 'ciam honesta,
Estos hejmo de la Vero.
Do prosperu Dominio
Komencita tiel favore ;
Nutru 'gi heroojn indajn
De la Imperio glorie.

The Butterfly.

I saw thee sitting near a flower's cup,
To drink its nectar in a dainty sup,
And thy two wings were rich with gorgeous paint,
Nor was there any blemish, any taint.

There came a child, a reckless, heartless boy,
Who watched thee jealously, with eager joy ;
He gripped thee, clutched thee with a cruel grasp,
And all thy body quivered from that clasp.

LAYS AND LYRICS.

Thy feathers tarnished, all thy beauty shamed,
Thou wert a toy, for one brief moment claimed ;
Then shattered, broken, lay thy lifeless corse,
And thy destroyer harboured no remorse.

I saw a maiden, gay with finery,
Bedecked with colours, bright and fair to see,
Partaking pleasure's cup with panting haste,
Rejoicing that she had a life to waste.

She too was seized, and crushed with savage glee,
And shuddered, in her pain, to think of thee ;
The rags that covered her concealed no shame,
And ev'ry trifle jested at her name.

Then lower, ever lower, was her flight,
Until her soul was quenched in darkest night.
All beauty gone, the heart within we see ;
Thou wert a caterpillar ; what was she ?

Her Eyelash.

You beg me to write on your eyelash a sonnet ;
(I'm thankful 'tis not to describe a new bonnet) ;
So I hasten, with pleasure, your wish to fulfil,
For where there's a way there should e'er be a will.
(At least, I have twisted the proverb a bit,
Which blame to my dulness, and not to my wit).
I shall fancy your eyelash as black as is kohl,
For the acme of beauty this is in the East ;
But your bright eyes are glancing right into my soul,
And I still must digress,—for a moment at least.
Then the eyelash is fringy, and silky, and long ;
I've been told these three signs always indicate beauty,
But that smile so bewitching is leading me wrong,
And I fear once again I'm forgetting my duty.
The eyelash, you say, is your sole fascination,
But I must demur to the strange imputation ;
Ah ! that blush on your cheek says you're only pretending—
How sweet the red bloom looks. It seems never ending.
To return to the eyelash—I'm sadly neglectful ;—
I wished to describe it,—sincerely, I did,—
But I fear I'm unable, though very regretful,
In this little instance, to do as I'm bid.
Such distracting attractions I cannot be missing ;
For now I'm regarding those sweet cherry lips.
If you've no objection, I'd rather be kissing
Than writing inaptly, and making such slips.

Fido.

Come here, my little fellow, and let us have a talk.
Prick up your ears ; approach me now with most majestic walk ;
For I am going to make you stare to know how great you are,
And, if you can reflect at all, you'll think yourself a Star.

I've often looked you in the face, and could not make you out ;
I knew this much, at least, you scamp, that you were not a lout ;
And still there's something in your look that puzzles me a deal,
And makes me sometimes quite believe you think as well as feel.

Come now, young mischief, cease your tricks, and leave that
curtain be ;
You would not try to tear it, if you knew its cost to me ;
Or perhaps you would. I know not. I cannot tell your mind,
But, if I could, the chances are some cunning I should find.

Stand up, sir ! Paw ! That's right ! Now, down ! You comic little
soul,
Mayhap you think yourself as wise as I think I am. Mole !
And yet, perchance, you may admire your master's ready wit,
And know if it were not for him you could not beg or sit.

No doubt you have a well-developed egoistic bump,
Believing were it not for you creation could not jump.
Come ! Use your tongue ! Deliver up the secrets that you know.
You will not ! Eh ? Then go and get your dinner down below.

He knows what that means. There ! He's off ! That most at-
tractive smell
Of cooking fetches him ; like me, he loves the dinner bell.
Well, I declare if Fido hasn't driven me to think,
And put me on old Darwin's track, to find the missing link.

Yet, though oft called a jolly dog, I'm not a jolly ape ;
However could that man let such a theory escape ?
No ! Even if we grant that dogs have ample mental power,
There's not a single ape alive improves one shining hour.

Still, on the whole, I must confess, I feel myself but small,
When I reflect that dogs can think, and we can not know all.
I have a little more respect for Fido, I must say,
And after this I'll give the rogue an extra bone a day.

Fido.

Ho ! proksimi'gu eto, por paroladi kune ;
Starigu do orelojn, kaj mar'su ja majeste ;
'Car mi vin montros kiel vi grandan eston havas,
Kaj se vi povas pensi vin mem mirindan kredas.

Mi ofte vin rigardis, sed ne komprenis vin ;
Nenia naivegulo vi estas, kredu min.
Sed ian ekrigardon vi havas tre mistera ;
Kelkfoje mi imagas vi estas konsidera.

Ha ! malboneto, 'cesu, ne 'siru la kurtenon ;
Ne vi difektus tion, se sciis 'gian koston ;
A'u, eble, jes : mi dubas, nek povas tion diri,
'Car mi suspektas ruzon en vi kredeble trovi.

Nun staru rekte, eto ! Piedeton donu ! ku'su !
Ridinda esta'jeto ! Ne malmodeste fu'su
Kredante vin sa'gema simile e'e al mi ;
Sed eble min la lertan admiras rajte vi.

Sendube egoiste vi kredas vin mirindan,
Kaj se vi ne ekzistus la mondon detruindan.
Nun, diru la sekreton kiun gardas vi interne ;
Vi volas ne ! Subiru do, kaj man'gu man'gon lerne.

Li scias tiun signifon. Li iras. Laodoro
De kuirado logas lin, 'gin amas en la koro.
Al mi simile 'satas tre la man'gostonorilon ;
Al mi simile 'guas tro bongustan la 'gentilon.

'Cu manka kuno estas do ? Gajegan hundon 'cie
Min oni nomas, sed mi ne simio estas ie.
Ho ! Kiel povas scienculo diri la certigon ?
La hundoj estas lertaj ja, sed ve simian ligan !

Mi devas tamen diri nun min sentas ja malgrandon,
Kiam mi pripensas ke ni ne transpasas fiksan randon ;
Kaj Fido, kiel hundo, jes, li povas pensi bone ;
Mi donos al la eto 'ciam aldonan oston done.

LAYS AND LYRICS.

Ode to an "Old Man."

O ! graceful emblem of thy native land,
Whose hide becomes so useful when 'tis tanned,
I dedicate, most beauteous kangaroo,
This (perhaps you'll call it odious) ode to you.

I watch thy ev'ry movement wistfully,
As envying thee thy grace and liberty ;
Thy food is simple—water, herbage, roots,
But, O ! thy skin makes most delightful boots.

And still, whene'er a chance thou canst obtain,
Thou dost not quite object to feed on grain ;
The squatters love thee, and selectors, too ;
They love thee unto death, spry kangaroo.

O ! dear "old man," how nicely thou dost hug,
Though I would not thy claws in me were dug ;
It seems that thou canst bear all sorts of weather ;
But yet I think I love thee best as leather.

In ancient days thou wert a giant beast,
And must have made for blacks a worthy feast ;
But I have tried thee edibly, and fail
To find thy virtue, save, in soup, thy tail.

On Hearing Beautiful Music.

What lovely sounds are these that greet mine ears ?
A shower of melody falls all around ;
'Tis Music,—gift bestowed by Heav'n on man,
Music whose wondrous power is thus profound.
Spell-bound I sit, and feel that influence sweet
Thrill all my soul with pleasure undefined.
How marvellous that seven simple sounds
Rear these harmonious structures, when combined !
Heav'n hath not given a clearer sign to man
Of Love and Hope than this sweet, tuneful power,
Which, like its flowers, it for our pleasure grants,
But makes our minds the soil whence springs the flower.

A Farewell to Maoriland.

O ! Maoriland, though we are leaving thee now,
And thy bold Northern cape is athwart our ship's prow,
We leave thee not gladly nor lightly—ah ! no—
Though it be for fresh pleasures that from thee we go.

LAYS AND LYRICS.

We have lived on thy shores,
And have loved thee alway ;
For thy climate has stores
Of health all through its day,
And the beauties of Nature
Are spread o'er thy face,
Where each mild fruit and creature
May find its fit place.

O ! there where the kauri, majestic and high,
In thy forests its stem rears aloft toward the sky,
And the fern tree so graceful droops elegant fronds,
And all o'er thy land, may Peace wreath round its bonds.
Its beautiful garlands of Comfort and Hope
That give to the Good and the True all their scope ;
May blessings descend on thy every home !
We love thee still dearly while from thee we roam.
O ! Maoriland, though we are leaving thee now,
And thy boldly rocky capes fast recede from our prow,
We leave thee not lightly nor gladly—ah ! no—
Though it be for new pleasures that from thee we go.

Adia'u al Maorujō.

Maorujō, e'c kvankam ni nun lasas cin,
Kaj la 'sipo forportas rapide tro nin,
Ni ne iras 'goje nek vole ; ho ! ne,
E'c kvankam novpla'cojn ni ser'cas ie.

Ni lo'gis kontente
En cia bela tero ;
Cin amas pripense
Kun tuta cia belo.
Naturo dum donas
Al ci fre'sajn 'carmojn,
Klimato cia nutras
Nur bonajn esta'jojn.

Ho ! kie la ka'uro altigas majeste
En ciał arbaroj la trunketon kreske,
Filikoj foliojn gracie kie fleksas,
La Paco girlandojn 'carmege kunplektas.
Girlandas komforton, esperon kaj belojn
Pruntantaj al bonoj influon kaj verojn ;
Kunvenu do en ciał hejmoj benadoj ;
Ni cin amas kare en 'ciuj vagadoj.
Maorujō, e'c kvankam ni nun lasas cin,
Kaj la 'sipo forportas rapide tro nin,
Ni ne iras 'goje nek vole ; ho ! ne,
E'c kvankam novpla'cojn ni ser'cas ie.

Love, Courtship, and Marriage.

When the World was first made a fit dwelling for Man,
And, placed there, a Helpmeet he found by his side,
'Twas then that the empire of Love first began,
The joy of the bridegroom, the faith of the bride.
The Heavens their Church, with its canopy blue ;
The forests' sweet songsters' the music they knew.
The butterfly sipping from every flower
Went merrily on in his light, heartless course ;
O'er them his example could then have no power ;
Inconstancy was not, nor awful Remorse.
When their offspring had spread, and Society grew,
And Woman her power o'er the stronger sex felt,
Then Love to her eyes took a shape that was new,
And prowess 'mongst rivals would oft her heart melt,
Or winning a coveted prize from the reach
Of some other fair one was what she would teach.
The turtle-doves, cooing in each shady bower,
Wooded peacefully on in their love's happy course,
O'er her their example could then have no power ;
Inconstancy hers, and oft awful Remorse.
But Man, too, could flirt, and unfaithful could prove,
From Beauty to Beauty would turn in despite ;
'Twas thus they misused and degraded poor Love,
Till it came to be looked on as silly and light.
Yet nobler minds winnowed the good from the bad,
Respected true Love, for its sorrows were sad.
The lover protecting his bride from a power
Bent harmfully on in its bold, heartless course
To them an example would loftily tower
Of constancy cowed not by Fear or Remorse.
Yes ! Love is the greatest of all the great truths
That Nature provides, and therewith our lives soothes ;
For what were existence on this little ball
Were't not for Love's feelings, which influence all ?
The youth and the maiden that live for each other
Are a world to themselves ; more than sister and brother.

LAYS AND LYRICS.

All ages, all nations, all colours, all creeds
Have acknowledged Love's sway, and succumbed to its needs ;
The fiercest of tyrants, the holiest of saints
Have bowed to its dictates, and scorned all restraints.
It conquers, enthralls, enraptures, delights,
Makes days into darkness, and brightens black nights.
The love of the heart is the veriest magician ;
It works more strange wonders than sage or physician.
Let Love be but pure, and constant, and true,
Its object but worthy, and heartfelt its view,
No harm can then follow, if Reason allied
Come close on its footsteps, to temper and guide ;
For love that is headstrong, and wayward, and mad
Is sure to lead on to results that are bad,
To folly and ridicule, passion and shame ;
Instead of approval, to bring only blame.
Society points, with her finger of fun,
At the innocent couple who wish to be one,
And slings little darts of envy and spite
At what should be hailed as praiseworthy and right,
But winks at the presence of libertines dire
Who seem to be courted, where fear should inspire ;
Like the pelican tears her own breast for her blood,
And feeds her poor fledglings from such a foul flood.
Let the innocent girl have a care whom she hears,
Who has all her sighs, who causes her tears ;
For many and many are those who deceive,
And her heart yearns for one in whom to believe.
Let the modest young man have a care whom he loves,
Of the manners and sentiments that he approves ;
To choose a girl blindly, fix scales on his eyes,
Will bring him a wife he cannot but despise.

Sweet Courtship ! when true Love directs thy course,
Leading thee on from joy to brighter joy,
What more enchanting time can those discourse
Who dwell upon thy days without alloy ?
Thou art an Angel hov'ring o'er two lives,
But prone to fly, if with thee some Fiend strives ;
Too gentle thou art e'er to stay for blows,
Winging thy way to healthier spheres of light.
If Evil then assumes thy shape, it grows
To what it truly is, a cause of spite ;
Be it foul Jealousy, or Anger hot,
Thou wilt not cast with them thy happy lot.
O ! Man, that thou couldst rule thy heartstrings so
As to the darling of thy vows to show
Nought but perfections, and O ! would that she
So faultless in her way of life might be

LAYS AND LYRICS.

That quarrels might not ruffle Courtship's time,
Nor slurs of pique Love's comely face begrime !
O ! Woman would that thou couldst so behave
As ne'er to foolish temper to be slave ;
That thou might'st e'er control each trivial whim,
And not with silly tears thy blind eyes dim !
When she has cause then Woman is but right
Not to be mocked with any serious slight.
If she feel sure her love is well returned,
Then Courtship is a bliss ; let it be earned.
If coquetry or light caprice be hers,
He who's enchained should soon find that he errs ;
Her manner or her words will be so vain,
No echo to his love will he obtain.
If he be weak, inconstant, or a knave
Her heart will teach her how herself to save ;
Better to fling all feeling to the winds
Than tie a knot that her in fetters binds.

Let lovers both be constant in attentions
And interchanges of a pure affection,
Each understand the other, then dissensions
Will not arise to hinder their direction ;
That is their Marriage, which will crown their hopes,
And lead them through Life's highways hand in hand ;
Though dangers may surround them, he who copes
With such can conquer, and their ills withstand.
Let them be confident, and true, and wise,
No wrong invincible can then arise.
When children's pattering footsteps fill their home,
Then should they know their highest joy has come ;
To train these up in virtue and in sense
Should be their pride and e'er their chief expense ;
Expense of trouble and of time it needs
To keep the garden of their mind from weeds,
Which oft grow up, and choke the healthful flowers
That would have sprung with teaching's fruitful showers.
Let mutual loving labours sweeten life,
And drive away fell care and foolish strife.
And let both make the name of Man and Wife
A bond to them, with sweetest pleasures rife.
Then silv'ry Age will come, with peaceful hand,
To streak their heads with lines of honoured white ;
They, blissful, will behold their children stand
Around them, worthy scions of lives so bright.
So after having lived in Goodness, Truth,
And Love, and all that's noble, since their youth,
When Death comes calm to fetch their souls away,
They'll wing aloft where Love can ne'er decay.

Por Estontaj Tagoj.

(Traduko.)

Rigardu 'goje la belegan vidon,
La montojn, la marbordon, kaj ekstere
La bluan maron, brilan vastan sidon ;
Rigardu por estontaj tagoj vere.
Memoru la golfeton tie brilegan ;
Admiru supre la lazuran 'cielon ;
A'uskultu oceanon la ondegan,
Kiu krias, " Venu, lasu la nivelon,"
Hodia' u nur vida'jon tian ne vidos ;
Vin vizitados la beleco hele ;
'Car ofte estontece interligos
Memoroj la ideojn 'ciam bele.
Tra ora nebuleto vi rigardos
La gloron kiu revenos pli plezure,
Kiam brule la someroj lunge da'uros,
Kaj riveretoj restos ja nekure.
Tiam a'udos vi ondegojn kiuj mu'gos
Trans sabla barileto, kaj la lago
Brilegos, la ondetoj bluaj fluos,
Ar'genta 'gemo inter la montaro.
Naturo malavara tion donas,
Ke pejza'gojn, marojn, montojn, lagojn
Belege via spirito 'ciam konas,
Kaj 'guos 'ciam la estontajn tagojn.

Suffragettes !

Suffragettes ! Suffragettes !
Oh ! they are such pretty pets !
How they draw us in their nets !
Suffragettes !

Why not have their constant votes,
Lovely lambs to poll for goats,
Advocates in petticoats,
Fair brunettes ?

Auburn, jet, and golden poll,
What a fascinating roll,
Full of sentiment and soul,
Blonde coquettes !

Gentle martyrs to their cause,
Let them make new-fashioned laws !
Novel whims for worn-out saws !
And old debts !

Lords and Commons, ope your eyes ;
Welcome such a glad surprise !
When sweet Psyche woos, who flies,
Who regrets ?

Candidates who have good looks,
Win your votes in shady nooks,
Court electresses, not cooks,
As your pets !

You who failed to get a seat,
Courage ! Try a quick repeat,
While you muster figures neat,
Suffragettes !

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